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ABSTRACT

This resource manual is intended to assist North Dakota school districts in making decisions about the appropriate use of paraeducators in providing services to all students in the public schools, including those with disabilities. It is designed to delineate the state requirements for training to ensure that adequate support is provided to the professionals hired in this capacity. The manual is meant to serve as a resource for general education teachers, special education personnel, related services personnel, administrators, and the paraeducators themselves. Sections of the manual address: (1) the definition of paraeducator; (2) a statement of beliefs and vision on the value and proposed roles of paraeducators; (3) North Dakota guidelines for making paraeducators' services more effective; (4) roles and responsibilities of the paraeducator; (5) roles and responsibilities of the supervisor; and (6) job performance evaluations. Appendices include suggestions for supervisory personnel, sample evaluation forms, a sample paraeducator portfolio, sample job descriptions for paraeducators, resources, administrative rules, outlines of required modules for paraeducator training, and information for paraprofessionals working with students who have visual impairments. (CR)

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Resource Manual:

The Implementation of Effective Paraeducator Practices in Educational Settings

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Introduction

Historical Aspects:

Paraprofessionals have been used to assist certified/licensed educators in educating students in the public schools in North Dakota for over 40 years. This practice became prevalent in the late 1950's when there was a rapid increase in class size in the larger cities in the state. Although students with disabilities were often excluded from attending public school programs, those who were allowed to attend were often provided a paraprofessional to assist with classroom activities. When special education programs were started in some of the schools in North Dakota in the early 1960's, it was a common practice to hire a teacher aide, or non-certified individual, to assist the special education teacher. These programs were usually in self-contained classrooms and often times located in facilities other than school buildings such as churches, community centers, or special buildings rented for the purpose of creating a 'special school'. After the enactment of PL 94-142 in 1975, mandating that public schools educate all students with disabilities, there was a rapid increase in the need for certified special education personnel to serve children with various disabilities. To meet staff shortage needs for teachers, school districts significantly increased the number of non-certified personnel employed to assist certified/licensed staff in delivering instruction. Trends over the years illustrate the historical increase in the use of paraprofessionals in the public schools.

North Dakota: Paraprofessionals by Year Statewide Totals

Year	Total FTE
1976-77	99.95
1977-78	Not Available
1978-79	120.75
1979-80	Not Available
1980-81	Not Available
1981-82	196.70
1982-83	231.90
1983-84	272.80
1984-85	309.50
1985-86	364.10
1986-87	360.05
1987-88	390.28
1988-89	435.29
1989-90	531.16
1990-91	600.60
1991-92	683.79
1992-93	716.48
1993-94	776.77
1994-95	837.69
1995-96	893.11
1996-97	898.15
1997-98	968.64
1998-99	1,100.41

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Titles

A variety of job titles have been used across the state based on the preferences of the school districts. Examples of job titles currently being used include teacher aide, teacher assistant, instructional assistant, paraprofessional, and paraeducator. Although the titles are used indiscriminately and have changed over the years, the essential duties have remained consistent. These persons are employed to assist certified/licensed special education personnel in the delivery of services to students with disabilities. As practices in the field have evolved from utilizing self-contained classroom models to more inclusive practices involving educating students with disabilities in general education settings, supervisory personnel for the paraeducators has shifted to include additional certified/licensed personnel such as administrators, general education teachers, related service specialists, and adult service providers.

Training

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) has been aware of the need for providing training to paraeducators since the inclusion of the first reference to paraeducators in the North Dakota *Guide I: Laws, Policies, and Regulations for Special Education for Exceptional Children*: in 1984. The requirement consisted of documentation of 6 clock hours of training provided at the local level. To date there has been no state certificate, license, credential, or endorsement for paraeducators. The North Dakota Center for Disabilities located at Minot State University wrote a federal grant in 1992 to design a paraeducator training project. The grant was written in response to the perceived lack of training for paraeducators across the state and the interest expressed by paraeducators in the field. A survey conducted by Minot State University indicated that 96% of practicing paraeducators were interested in receiving pre-service and inservice training. The scope of this project included utilizing curriculum review committees to assist in writing 26 training modules, field testing the modules in selected school districts in the state, and creating a model for delivering the training. Each module was designed to serve as a stand-alone module or to be completed in a sequential manner resulting in more comprehensive training. The modules used a pre-post test format to document successful mastery with options for completing the training through participation in group training sessions or on an individualized basis. The training design included having paraeducators complete sequences of four modules for a four-semester hour undergraduate college course. Completing successive modules for college credit would eventually result in an Associate of Arts degree in Special Education.

Using Modules

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction utilized the Minot State University paraeducator training program to provide statewide training to paraeducators. Discretionary grants were awarded to local special education units to access the training for the paraeducators employed in the schools served by the units. Each unit was required to select an adjunct instructor who received training through Minot State University. The adjunct instructors then taught the modules locally and submitted the post-tests to Minot State University to be scored. The state adopted, as a minimum requirement, the completion of the first four modules as required training for all paraeducators. The required modules included: *Roles and Responsibilities of Paraeducators; Introduction to Disabilities and Effective Instruction; Serving Students with Disabilities in Integrated Settings; and Strengthening Behavior*. Minot State University issued a certificate of completion to paraeducators successfully completing these modules.

Although the four modules were designed to meet the requirements for the first of the four semester hour courses, *Sped. 105 Paraeducator Orientation to Special Education*, enrolling for college credit was optional for the paraeducators. Progress in completing the training was tracked at the state level via computer printouts periodically submitted by Minot State University to state special education personnel.

Legal Authority

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997, Rules and Regulations make provisions for the use of paraprofessionals and assistants.

> "A state may allow paraprofessionals and assistants who are appropriately trained and supervised, in accordance with State law, regulations, or written policy, in meeting the requirements of this part to be used to assist in the provision of special education and related services to children with disabilities under Part B of the Act." Sect. 300.136(b)(4)(f).

This provision is contained within the context of describing the Personnel Standards provisions of the IDEA. Each state is required to have a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) committee which addresses the issues inherent in assuring an adequate supply of qualified special education, general education, and related services personnel, including paraeducators. State education agencies are required to establish and maintain personnel standards to ensure that personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained. Rule language has been added that allows paraeducators who are appropriately trained to assist in the provision of special education.

Study

In 1995 the North Dakota CSPD committee began a review process of the status of paraeducator guidelines. In 1996 the CSPD established a special task force to review existing state guidelines and to make recommendations for appropriate changes in the state requirements, process, and procedures for documenting training. In April 1998 the paraeducator task force commissioned a study designed to research existing local school district practices and procedures relative to the utilization of paraeducators. The study was completed by John Hoover, Ed Simanton, and Carole Milner of the Bureau of Educational Services and Applied Research at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, North Dakota. The survey was completed by 554 special education teachers, 153 administrators, 572 paraeducators, and 297 general education teachers. The survey was designed to measure the respondents' prior experiences with paraeducators, preferences for changes in state guidelines, and existing practices. The CSPD task force utilized this input in the design of recommendations for changes in *Guide I: Laws, Policies, and Regulations for Special Education for Exceptional Children*. These changes are reflected in the number of hours of required training, the procedures for accessing and documenting the training, and the content of the training. This resource guide reflects the outcome of the task force's recommendations, approval by the CSPD and IDEA Advisory Committees, and review by NDDPI personnel.

How Should the Resource Manual Be Used?

The *Resource Manual: The Implementation of Effective Paraeducator Practices in Educational Settings* document was developed to assist school districts in making decisions about the appropriate use of paraeducators in providing services to all students in the public schools, including those with disabilities. It is designed to delineate the state requirements for training to ensure that adequate support and training is provided to the professionals hired in this capacity. The manual is meant to serve as a resource for general education teachers, special education personnel, related service personnel, administrators, and the paraeducators themselves. Potential uses include:

- a resource to enhance communication among parents, teachers, and paraeducators;
- a reference for requirements established by state and federal rules and regulations;
- a tool to assist school district personnel in developing and adopting local district guidelines for effective paraeducator practices;
- a resource for reviewing district policies and practices, for planning paraeducator staff development activities, and for considering resource allocation; and
- a convenient source in which to locate the training modules with references for additional training content.

What Does the Term Paraeducator Mean?

The term paraeducator is recommended as the title for the teacher assistant utilized in public school classrooms in the state. This title was selected by the CSPD task force as a result of the 1998 study conducted by the University of North Dakota, which showed that a majority of respondents were either utilizing or preferred that title. The term paraeducator is defined as:

> "...a school employee whose position entails providing instructional support and who delivers other direct services to students under the supervision of a certified teacher or other licensed personnel. Professionals competent to supervise a paraeducator consist of special education teachers, general education teachers, licensed related service personnel, and administrators. The certified or licensed personnel have the ultimate responsibility for the design, implementation, and evaluation of educational and related service programs and student progress. The certified or licensed personnel coordinate and supervise the paraeducators in their role in helping students achieve the objectives in their individualized education programs (IEP)."

Paraeducators are essential members of the educational teams serving students with disabilities. They provide assistance to a variety of students in the public school programs and other community learning environments. They work anywhere special education services are provided, including general education classrooms, lunchrooms, playgrounds, school buses, vocational work sites, computer labs, and school media centers. They are employed in early childhood, elementary, middle school, secondary school programs, and residential educational facilities. They provide a resource that contributes significantly to the success of individual students, schools, and educational programs.

Statement of Beliefs and Vision

This document, *Resource Manual: The Implementation of Effective Paraeducator Practices in Educational Settings*, is based on the spirit and convictions expressed in the beliefs and vision statements which were developed by the CSPD Paraeducator task force. They are offered as a model for local school districts for use in developing their own beliefs, vision and goals. The vision and beliefs are also offered to encourage other stakeholder groups such as special education administrative units and colleges and universities to have conversations and reach consensus on their commitment to improving the supports provided to paraeducators. The beliefs and vision statements apply to both general and special education teachers, as well as to related service personnel and other support staff professionals. The statements also consider parents to be essential partners in effectively meeting the needs of all students. The term "educational team" refers to the various individuals who are involved in the planning and implementation of individualized education programs (IEPs) and other teams that function within a school to serve students with and without disabilities. An example of a typical educational team includes general and special education teacher(s), related service personnel, paraeducator(s), parents, students and the local building principal or administrator.

Beliefs:

- The value of paraeducators and the complexity of their roles are recognized as important to the success of the school.
- Paraeducators are respected and valued members of the educational team.
- Paraeducators are critical to the social, emotional, academic, and vocational success of students.
- Paraeducators play an active and essential role in their work with students by providing encouragement, support, assistance, and advocacy.
- Communication among paraeducators, certified and licensed personnel, and parents is carefully planned and carried out.
- Paraeducators understand the needs of students and have the specialized training to meet the student's needs.
- All paraeducators have a professional identity and advocate for their profession by maintaining positive, supportive, cooperative, and professional relationships.
- Teachers, administrators and other members of the educational team enable paraeducators to be effective in their work by providing resources, support, feedback, and assistance.
- Leaders at the state, district, and building level provide the systems-level support and resources to enable paraeducators to be effective in their work.

Vision

North Dakota's educational systems provide quality paraeducator services, which contribute to the best educational opportunities for students being educated in public schools. This vision will be operationalized when the following goals are achieved.

- Each Local Education Agency (LEA) in North Dakota has adopted and consistently implements effective paraeducator practice standards.

- A plan for providing coordinated, ongoing staff development for paraeducators, and the administrators and teachers, who work with them, has been developed by the agencies employing the educational team. The staff development opportunities provide paraeducators with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the needs of students. Staff development opportunities provide teachers and administrators with the knowledge and skills to effectively supervise and work with paraeducators.
- School improvement efforts offer a variety of options for supporting and preparing paraeducators, including support groups, study teams, and access to statewide and national networks of paraeducators and those concerned with paraeducator issues.
- Preservice opportunities throughout the state are available to individuals interested in becoming paraeducators. During preservice training of teachers and administrators, knowledge and skills on how to effectively work with and supervise paraeducators are provided.
- The role of a paraeducator is valued as a lifetime career. Access to training will be available to those paraeducators who wish to pursue careers in teaching or other professional careers in education.
- Adequate recognition is given to paraeducators to enhance recruitment and ensure maximum retention of paraeducators. Pay and benefits are commensurate with experience and specialized training.
- Paraeducators are actively supported by the teachers, administrators, and other members of the educational team and each other.
- Paraeducators are given time to actively plan and communicate with all individuals involved in the students' educational programs.

North Dakota State Policies

This section contains recommended guidelines for making paraeducator services more effective. It is intended to facilitate decision-making by various consumer groups. The guidelines may be considered a tool to assist in developing and adopting standards for effective paraeducator practices at the local level. The guidelines reflect current best practices in the state and nation and are designed to assure that the mission of the Department of Public Instruction's responsibilities to all students in North Dakota, including those with disabilities, is enhanced through the successful utilization of paraeducators. **Sentences presented in bold text are the policies, as they appear in North Dakota *Guide I: Laws, Policies, and Regulations for Special Education for Exceptional Children*.**

1.0 **QUALIFICATIONS OF PARAEDUCATORS: Paraeducators must work under the direct supervision of a licensed teacher. Although the licensed teacher may delegate specific tasks to the paraeducator, the legal and ethical responsibility to the student for all services provided or omitted cannot be delegated; it must remain the sole responsibility of the supervising licensed teacher. A minimum of twenty (20) clock hours of inservice instruction must be provided to the paraeducator.**

The paraeducator should be considered an integral member of the school's educational team and of the educational teams for individual students. They should be respected and supported as essential team members responsible for assisting certified, credentialed, and licensed personnel in the delivery of instruction, support, and related services.

1.1 **A job description must be developed and maintained on file, with a copy maintained in the special education office, outlining the duties and skills to be performed by the paraeducator.**

The entire educational team participates within clearly defined roles to provide an appropriate educational program for all students. The job description should address critical job duties and limitations evidenced by the following:

Quality Indicators:

- The job description specifically defines the job expectations and serves as a basis for the paraeducator's evaluation.
- The role of the paraeducator is clearly defined.
- Paraeducators are regularly involved in planning but are not responsible for planning the instructional program for students.
- Paraeducators are not required to assume responsibilities assigned to licensed staff, such as developing IEP goals, creating lesson plans, formally evaluating students, and modifying lesson plans without supervision. Paraeducators should not be assigned to serve as a substitute teacher unless the paraeducator holds the appropriate teacher license. The conditions of employment must specify the circumstances under which a licensed teacher employed as a paraeducator will serve as a substitute teacher.
- Clearly written procedures for routine and emergency tasks for paraeducators and licensed staff members are in place.

1.2 **Paraeducators must work under the direct supervision of a licensed teacher. The responsibility for students remains with the licensed supervisor. The supervisor may be a general education teacher, administrator, credentialed special education personnel, and/or related service personnel working within the context of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. Provided that the training, supervision, documentation, and planning are appropriate, the following tasks may be delegated to a paraeducator.**

- **1.2.1 Assist in the implementation of IEPs developed by the team, and under the direction of the supervising teacher in individual or small group settings.**
- **1.2.2 Assist in collecting student assessment and performance data or document student progress toward meeting IEP objectives and reporting to the supervising teacher**
- **1.2.3 Perform noninstructional duties such as preparation of materials, scheduling, and space/equipment maintenance and supervise student activities in the resource room or other various educational settings.**
- **1.2.4 Assist general education teachers in implementing student adaptations, modifications, and accommodations within the classroom settings.**

Paraeducators must receive appropriate supervision to ensure the delivery of effective educational services to students. The school district is responsible for assuring that the supervisory responsibility for paraeducators is being implemented.

Quality Indicators:

- Documentation that licensed teachers, related service personnel, and administrators received a minimum of two clock hours of training in the supervision of paraeducators prior to being assigned to direct, support, or supervise a paraeducator.
- Documentation of content of training. Suggested topics include:
  - Interviewing skills
  - Mentoring
  - Communication
  - Problem solving
  - Motivation skills
  - Coordinating skills
  - Delegating skills
  - Feedback and evaluation skills
  - Learning and professional development skills
- The supervisory assignment is in writing and has been clearly communicated to both the supervising teacher and the paraeducator.
- Specific procedures, which outline the structured, systematic management, supervision, and performance evaluations of paraeducators have been established.
- Paraeducators receive similar content training, ideally at the same time, as licensed teachers, related service personnel, and administrators.
- The policy and procedures address providing supervision that supports the professional growth of the paraeducator. These would include opportunities for self-evaluation and input by the paraeducator.

1.3 **Orientation for the paraeducator must be conducted within the first five (5) working days in which the paraeducator assumes assigned duties. *Documented orientation must include a minimum of five (5) clock hours of* training, including the following: expectations of the paraeducator; confidentiality of records and verbal information; introduction to assigned supervisor(s) and work areas; building routines; and reviewing the individual needs of students being served.**

The orientation training must be verified by the certified, credentialed or licensed staff member assigned as the paraeducator's supervisor. Initial training provided should include the following elements:

- Five (5) clock hours of training must be provided by the supervising teacher or building administrator.
- The training must include school policy, rules, and routines in addition to the individualized needs of the students to be served.
- Training must be individualized.
- Training must be completed within five (5) calendar days of assuming responsibilities.

Quality Indicators:

- Documentation that the *assigned* supervisor provided the training within the first five working days in which the paraeducator assumed assigned duties.
- Documentation that the training addressed the expectations of the paraeducator, confidentiality of records and verbal information, and introduction to assigned supervisor, administrators, works areas, and building routines.
- Copy of the school's handbook provided to the paraeducator with a review of those components pertinent to the paraeducator's work requirements.
- Documentation that there was a review of the individual student programs including the impact of the disabilities on the student's ability to make acceptable progress within the general education curriculum. The training should address the unique needs of the student(s), expected outcomes, and instructional procedures and monitoring techniques and procedures.

Orientation Checklist:

____ The supervisory assignment is presented to the paraeducator in writing.
____ The paraeducator has been introduced to the principal and other teachers, paraeducators, and support staff.
____ The paraeducator has been given a tour of the building.
____ The paraeducator has been given a copy of the school's policy and procedures manual.
____ The paraeducator has been informed of the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor.
____ The Paraeducator Training/Inservice Record has been completed and signed by the supervisor and paraeducator (see sample form in Appendix E-2).

1.4 **Inservice for the paraeducator must be conducted within one year of employment in which the paraeducator assumes assigned duties. The training must consist of at least an *additional* fifteen (15) clock hours of instruction including three (3) hours in each of the following five topical areas:**

1.4.1 **North Dakota *Resource Manual: The Implementation of Effective Paraeducator Practices in Educational Settings***

1.4.2 ***Student Support Concepts***
- a) applicable laws
- b) referral process including BLST and evaluation processes
- c) procedural safeguards
- d) IEP and LRE
- e) paraeducator involvement in the IEP process
- f) service delivery system
- g) preparation checklists for paraeducators
- h) communication and interpersonal relating skills

1.4.3 ***Human Growth and Development and the Impact of Disabilities***
- a) physical development including sensory and motor, cognitive, social and emotional, and communication and language
- b) categories of disabilities
- c) personal care concepts including seizure management, CPR, first aid, universal precautions, basic positioning and transferring, adaptive equipment care and maintenance, and toileting and self-care needs

1.4.4 ***Utilizing Effective Instructional Strategies to Serve Students with Disabilities in Integrated Settings***
- a) adult's role
- b) task analysis and discrepancy analysis
- c) instructional designs and data collection
- d) teaching strategies, prompting, and fading
- e) providing feedback to the students on task performance
- f) selective attention and motivation
- g) documenting student progress through data collection and anecdotal recording

1.4.5 ***Strengthening Behavior***
- a) definitions
- b) causes and needs
- c) observational strategies
- d) data collection
- e) reinforcement techniques
- f) legal and ethical parameters

Quality Indicators:

- Documentation that the paraeducator received the training within one calendar year of assuming assigned duties.
- Documentation that the training content included: North Dakota *Resource Manual: The Implementation of Effective Paraeducator Practices in Educational Settings; Student Support Concepts; Human Growth and Development; Utilizing Effective Instructional Strategies;* and *Strengthening Behavior.*

1.5 **Indication of completion of twenty (20) hours of training by the paraeducator must be documented by a letter of verification, or certificate of completion signed by the person providing the training. The letter of verification, or certificate of completion; must be on file in the special education administrative office.** (See Samples, Appendix E-1).

Quality Indicators:

Acceptable forms of documentation of training consists of:

- Transcripts of college course work in special education;
- Documentation of the completion of paraeducator modules from Minot State University;
- Certificates or Letters of Completion documenting the successful completion of other equivalent modules, courses, or inservice training sessions (CEUs);
- Paraeducator Training/Inservice Record form signed by supervisory personnel or trainer; and
- Documentation of the completion of equivalent training in other states.

1.6 **A plan for the paraeducator for ongoing training, supervision, support, and consultation must be developed by supervisory personnel. The plan must include a minimum of four (4) clock hours of training per year, and the frequency of supervision and consultation as approved by the building and/or special education administrator.**

Quality Indicators:

- Documentation that paraeducators are included in district/unit staff development plans and programs.
- Documentation that paraeducators are trained with certified staff whenever possible to provide common understanding and effective teamwork.
- Documentation that training needs, including those of paraeducators, are assessed periodically at the district level or unit level.
- Documentation that outlines staff development needs, including those of paraeducators, on an annual basis.

1.7 **Administrators provide support for effective paraeducator practices.**

1.7.1 Administrators are well informed about how appropriate paraeducator services should be implemented and what situations require the assignment of a paraeducator.

1.7.2 Administrators inform the school board of the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators.

1.7.3 Administrators assume an active and substantive role in overseeing the participation of paraeducators in effective instructional programs.

1.7.4 Administrators provide leadership to the teaming process which enables paraeducators to be partners in planning and delivering services.

1.7.5 Administrators create a work schedule that provides time for regular, organized and systematic communication among the paraeducators and other members of the educational team.

1.7.6 Time, funding, and other resources are provided to enable paraeducators to participate in staff development, meetings, and other opportunities for communication.

Quality Indicators: Documentation will be reviewed during state and local monitoring activities and may include:

- interviews with superintendent and principals;
- interviews with paraeducators; and
- review of school district staff development plan.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Paraeducator

What duties can be delegated to paraeducators?

Paraeducators are most effective when they work alongside the professional educator in delivering instructional and other direct services. The paraeducator serves as a resource and support to the teacher by providing additional time and attention to individuals and small groups of students. The paraeducator can effectively compliment the licensed personnel's mission by being an additional observer in the instructional setting for monitoring student responsiveness, being alert to individual needs and problems, providing tutorial instruction for individuals and small groups of students, and providing the extra "personal touch" that many students need. Specific duties that may be performed by paraeducators consist of:

- implementing plans as specified by the teacher;
- assisting with the administration, monitoring, and scoring of criterion referenced measures;
- assisting small groups and individuals with lessons, practice exercises, and independent work;
- implementing positive behavior management strategies using the same emphasis and techniques as the teacher;
- collecting data and observing and rewarding student behavior;
- sharing ideas and concerns during conferences; and
- constructing or acquiring instructional materials designed by the supervising teacher.

What responsibilities cannot be delegated to a paraeducator?

Certain responsibilities are specified by law and require that a licensed professional with appropriate training perform the duties. Teaching duties and responsibilities that fall in this category cannot be delegated to a non-licensed professional. Examples of duties in this category consist of:

- completing standardized assessment measures;
- setting goals for the students and designing lesson plans to attain those goals;
- determining appropriate objectives for class and for individual children;
- planning lessons and activities for entire class and individual students;
- designing behavior management strategies for entire class and for individual children;
- meeting independently with parents and initiating conferences concerning the student's progress; and
- revising student's individualized education program based on progress and observation.

	Duties Performed by Teacher	Duties Performed by Paraeducator
Classroom Organization	• Plans weekly schedule	• Implements plans as specified by the teacher
	• Plans lessons/activities for entire class and individual children	
Assessment	• Assesses individual children • Administers tests to entire class	• Assists with monitoring, scoring and may give daily or weekly criteria tests for IEP objectives
Setting Objectives	• Determines appropriate objectives for class and for individual children	• Implements lessons to meet child's instructional objectives
Teaching	• Teaches lessons for entire class, small groups, and individual children	• Assists small groups and individuals with lessons, practice exercises, and monitors seat work for understanding
Behavior Management	• Plans behavior management strategies for entire class and for individual children	• Implements positive behavior management strategies using the same emphasis and techniques as the teacher, and may be responsible for data collection, observing and rewarding student behavior
Working with Parents	• Meets with parents • Initiates conferences concerning child's progress	• Meets with parents in conjunction with the teacher
Lesson Planning	• Plans lessons for students and paraeducators	• Carries out teacher's plans for students, and assists teacher when appropriate
Building Classroom Partnership	• Arranges schedule for conferences, shares goals and philosophy with paraeducators, organizes job duties for paraeducators	• Shares ideas and concerns during conferences; carries out duties as directed by teacher
Revisions to Student Programming	• Revises student program based on progress and observation	• Monitors student progress in educational programs and relates findings to supervising teachers
Instructional Materials	• Designs instructional materials to implement IEP goals and objectives	• Constructs or acquires instructional materials designed by the supervising teacher
Discipline	• Responsible for following district guidelines for discipline and implementing individualized discipline plans	• Disciplines students following district or individualized plans communicated by the supervising teacher

Paraeducator's Roles Should Be Clearly Defined

The paraeducator's role when working alone with students should also be clearly defined. These are guidelines, and if an individual situation varies from these suggestions, the administration should be aware of the situation. Some of the responsibilities paraeducators should and should not be required to perform include the following:

Paraeducators may:

1. Be left alone in the classroom, in a planned way, when the supervising teacher is called away.
2. Work without direct supervision with individuals or groups of students on concepts introduced by the supervising teacher.
3. Have specific instructional and management responsibility for students.
4. Be involved in the student staffing, if appropriate, and their duties with the child are substantial.
5. Be used to support integration of students with disabilities in general education classes by tutoring students in general class assignments, giving tests orally, and/or providing other services necessary for the student to participate in the least restrictive environment.
6. Be assigned record keeping tasks relevant to classroom assignment.
7. Aid the teacher in supervising assemblies and group field trips, take individual students on school-related errands, job interviews, recreation, or shopping.

Paraeducators <u>may not</u>:

1. Be used as a substitute for certified teachers, unless they have appropriate teacher certification.
2. Teach completely new concepts and skills.
3. Be given primary responsibility for developing programs when working with individual students.
4. Be assigned to attend student staffings in lieu of the supervising teacher.
5. Be given primary responsibility for the integration into general education efforts of one or more students or used to teach general education curriculum content to students without disabilities.
6. Be used to carry out clerical responsibilities usually assigned to other staff members in the building.
7. Take full responsibility for supervising field trips, assemblies, or other non-teaching duties usually assigned to teachers (e.g., extra duty and school clubs).

What are the essential skills for a paraeducator to develop?

- Confidentiality (as explained below)
- Basic verbal communication, interpersonal relationship, and teaming skills
- Knowledge of their role as a paraeducator in contrast to that of a licensed teacher or other credentialed or licensed professional
- Knowledge of the policies and procedures of the school district or system in which they work
- Basic knowledge of child development including emotional development and self-esteem
- Basic knowledge of the nature of the disabilities and the impact of the disabilities on the student's ability to succeed in school
- Basic knowledge of instructional procedures
- Basic knowledge of observational and recording skills including data collection
- Basic skills in first aid, CPR, and other emergency procedures
- Basic understanding of behavior strengthening techniques and motivational variables
- Demonstration of consistent use of positive behavior management strategies
- Information specific to individual students including unique learning style, motivational variables, and physical needs

What is confidentiality?

As part of the educational team(s) providing services to students with special needs, paraeducators may have access to private information about students and their families. This may include areas such as:

- formal and informal test results;
- records of student behavior in the educational setting;
- student academic progress;
- family relationships; and
- family income or economic status.

This information, along with other records and files, is usually contained in the student's permanent records. This information is gathered from the family, observed in various settings, or secured from other school personnel.

The student and his/her family expect, and are guaranteed by law, that the information will be kept confidential, and made available only to personnel authorized to view it. Parents must be permitted to inspect any, and all, information related to their children without any delay. Parents may have a representative, such as an attorney, inspect the records. School officials, including teachers and administrators who have a legitimate educational interest may also access educational records.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 1974) requires that school districts maintain a record of each disclosure of personally identifiable information or a request for disclosure. This requirement does not apply to school officials, parents, students over age 18 regarding their own records, or individuals with written consent from the parents.

Any information on students requested of a paraeducator should be referred to the supervising teacher.

Teachers may disclose directory information such as: name, address, telephone number, date, and place of birth. However, the information that is given may or may not be harmful to the student and should be scrutinized for the effect it will have. A general ethical principle held by most professional organizations is that confidentiality can be broken only when there is clear and immediate danger to an individual or society. A paraeducator should not be put in a position to make these types of decisions. If a situation of this type arises, the supervising teacher should be informed.

Teachers are required to report known and suspected incidents of abuse and neglect. North Dakota was one of the first states to enact a child abuse and neglect reporting statute. Criminal penalties for failing to report abuse and neglect can be imposed on educational personnel. If this becomes an issue, a supervising teacher must be notified immediately.

Confidential

Examples of confidential information in the student's file include:

- transcripts of grades;
- video and audiotapes of the student;
- medical records (e.g., illnesses, inoculations, hospital treatment plans);
- family information;
- evaluation results;
- reports from juvenile court or social service agencies;
- behavior programming issues (e.g., psychological examinations, discipline reports);
- IEP and case study information; and
- correspondence concerning the student.

School Responsibility

The school is responsible for protecting student/family confidential information by:

- naming the person responsible for ensuring confidentiality;
- guaranteeing all persons who collect or use such information are trained in the school district's policies regarding confidentiality;
- keeping, for public inspection, a list of employees who can view these records. People on the list are the only ones authorized to share information contained in the records. As paraeducators, these are the only individuals with whom the information may be discussed;
- permitting those on the list to see only information concerning the student they work with;
- requiring parental consent before using a student's records for any purposes other than those related to providing special education and related services; and
- informing parents when confidential information on their child is no longer needed. This information should be removed from the file, unless it is needed later (e.g., to secure benefits from other agencies).

Rights

The rights of students and their families must be balanced against specific school interests. A student's right to privacy may need to be surpassed in the form of:

- search and seizure, when there is a reasonable suspicion of illegal behavior;
- disclosure in order to provide appropriate supervision to protect others from violent or aggressive behavior;
- reporting suspected child abuse; and
- creating, maintaining, and releasing educational records.

To avoid infringing on privacy rights, it is imperative that reports, statements and records created by the school are used only as required and permitted by the school district.

As members of an educational team, paraeducators may have special relationships with different teachers (both general and special education), administrators, support staff, parents, students, and other community members. The effectiveness of these relationships depends not only on the quality of work performed, but also on the professional and ethical behavior demonstrated. The professional duties of paraeducators include:

- respecting human and legal rights of students, their families, and others with whom they work;
- maintaining strict confidentiality about all information connected with students and their families;
- following district guidelines and procedures on handling information and situations;
- being a dependable and cooperative team member; and
- seeking information from various sources on best practices in working with students.

The role paraeducators play within the school system does not end when the school day is finished. They are representatives of the school, like administrators and teachers, in the community. Paraeducators will have contacts outside the school environment. In fact, with increased vocational and community placement of students with disabilities, paraeducators have contacts with the community during the school day, as well as after school. Paraeducators can be an effective link between school and community.

What is the paraeducator's Code of Ethics?

Paraeducators must follow ethical guidelines when working with all students including those with disabilities. Paraeducators will be involved with many other educational personnel, parents, students, administrators and encounter highly sensitive information concerning students and families. It is extremely important that paraeducators develop a code of ethics that outlines acceptable practices for working with students and adhering to the principles of confidentiality. The code should include specific responsibilities as well as a guide for maintaining relationships with students, parents, teachers, school personnel, and community members. A suggested code of ethics for paraeducators consists of:

Code of Ethics – Accepting Responsibility

- Engage only in activities for which you are qualified or trained.
- Do not communicate student progress or concerns to parents or others unless directed to do so by the supervising teacher(s).
- Refer concerns about the student by other students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members to the supervising teacher.
- Recognize that the supervising teacher has the ultimate responsibility for instruction and management of the educational environment.
- Follow directions prescribed by the supervising teacher.
- Ask the supervising teacher for direction and guidance if questions arise.
- Observe and share findings with the supervising personnel concerning the children with whom you work.

Code of Ethics – Relationships With Students And Parents

- Discuss school problems and confidential matters only with appropriate personnel.
- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory practices based on a student's disability, race, sex, cultural background, religion, or socio-economic status.
- Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all students, their family, and staff members.
- Present yourself as a positive adult role model.
- Learn student's name, interests, and other characteristics as soon as possible.
- Show interest in students and adapt instruction to their unique characteristics as much as possible.

Code of Ethics – Relationships with Teachers and Related Service Personnel

- Recognize the teacher as the supervisor in the setting.
- Establish effective communication and a positive relationship with the teacher.
- Discuss concerns and questions about the teacher or his/her teaching methods with the teacher.
- Readily share information about students and the educational setting with the teacher.
- Follow the school district's grievance procedure when problems cannot be solved.

Code of Ethics – Relationships With School Administrators and Other Personnel

- Accept responsibility for improving your skills in helping students reach their full potential.
- Seek information on activities that will benefit the students.
- Know school policies and procedures and follow the appropriate chain of command.
- Represent the school in a positive manner.
- Be on time and have a regular attendance pattern.
- Be cooperative and honest with all professional staff, administrators, and support staff members.

Summary of Qualities of An Effective Paraeducator

1.	**Flexible:**	Needs to be able to accept and deal with changes. Schedules, student assignments, techniques, routines are all subject to change.
2.	**Conscientious:**	Follows through with instructions of supervisor and team of professionals. Regards all team members with respect, realizing all are important contributing members to the student's progress.
3.	**Open-Minded:**	Needs to be a willing learner. Listens, asks questions, follow instructions and asks for clarification from case manager/supervisor. Always directs questions and concerns to the supervisor first, who then routes questions and information.
4.	**Sense of Pride in Work**	A paraeducator working with students with special needs is an important team member. This work in the field of education and special education has a direct impact on a student's life. As a team member, a paraeducators is a representative of the program, the school, the public school system and the overall field of special education. Therefore, appropriate dress, behavior, conversation and a positive attitude are essential.
5.	**Concise:**	Keeps accurate records as instructed by supervisor and team, such as program data, contacts from parents and any concerns or observations about a child's health, safety, etc.
6.	**Confidential:**	Keeps information about a student and their family private and confidential as Public Law 105-17 (IDEA) and FERPA require. Knows what is heard and seen in school stays in school. Remembers information is not to be used as conversation or gossip in the lounge with school staff or in the community.

7.	**Acts, Not Reacts:**	As situations arise with a student or others, remembers to STOP, THINK, and then ACT. Mature attitude and behavior are a must.
8.	**Responsible:**	Realizes the importance of listening to instructions and training in techniques. Views work with students as important. Therefore, any details, observations or concerns about a student are noted and reported to the supervisor.
9.	**Enthusiastic:**	Views work as a challenge not as insurmountable obstacles. Utilizes follow-through, creativity and persistence.
10.	**Positive "We Can" Attitude:**	Has a strong belief in the importance of work with students. Realizes the negative or positive image one can give to others through comments, gestures, expressions and behaviors. Therefore, chooses to emphasize the positive "We Can!" or "Anything is Possible!" attitude knowing that trying on a daily basis eventually leads to success.

Suggestions for Paraeducators about Supervision

The opportunities are unlimited; the paraeducator will be involved in many different situations. This will not happen all at once. The principal and the supervising teacher(s) will decide the areas of involvement in the educational program for the paraeducator.

The paraeducator is responsible to the principal and to the supervising professional(s) in the workplace. They are ready to answer questions, supply information, and suggest solutions to problems. The key to the success of this program is the paraeducator's ability to work together as part of an educational team. A sense of loyalty to the school and a proper regard for professional ethics are essential. Therefore, the paraeducator should become acquainted with the general policies of the school and maintain strict confidence about the children's records, school problems, and opinions about others in the workplace.

A "good relationship" means that the paraeducator should:

- become a member of the team, in spirit, as well as in name;
- strive for a consistent approach in working with students;
- not allow students to circumvent the supervising teacher's directions or authority;
- remember that school is designed to help students grow independently as well as to gain knowledge;
- maintain an attitude of encouragement with students;
- remember that each student needs successful experiences and wants to be important to the paraeducator;
- refer to each student by name;
- emphasize the positive whenever correcting a student;
- plan ahead;
- try to foresee and prevent trouble before it happens;
- react maturely in emotional situations; usually when students disagree with the paraeducator, it is not meant personally. They may be demonstrating frustration with their perception of the educational demands and experiences;
- treat all information about students and families in strictest confidence;
- recognize that each student is different and has a unique pace and pattern of growth and development; and
- remember that each student has a need for special attention and caring from adults.

Roles and Responsibilities of Supervisors

Licensed teachers and administrators working with paraeducators, either inside or outside the classroom, must rely upon their own professional judgement when assigning duties. Although the paraeducator will attend inservice classes to learn skills that will be helpful in the classroom, the orientation training must be provided by the supervising professional. It is important for the supervising professional to discover any special talents the paraeducator may have, to have conferences about the paraeducator's work, and to guide the paraeducator in developing professionally to his/her fullest potential.

With careful planning, the supervising professional and the paraeducator will develop a good working relationship. The paraeducator must be made to feel comfortable and welcome and given the time to discuss the expectations and duties of the position. Gradually, the paraeducator will become an integral part of the school activities and can be a valuable addition to the entire school. Planning between the supervising professional and the paraeducator is critical to promote positive interactions including:

- giving the paraeducator a clear assignment of duties and responsibilities as they are developed;
- clarifying the discipline role and expectations of the paraeducator;
- sharing information that will help in understanding the students' needs;
- assisting the paraeducator to learn to contribute positive and helpful communications;
- assisting the paraeducator to maintain an open-minded and objective outlook;
- assisting the paraeducator to recognize the need to allow students to make errors and approach tasks creatively; and
- assisting the paraeducator to develop a realistic viewpoint about the students.

Planning

The administrative and programmatic duties of both teachers and paraeducators are linked to achieving the educational goals and objectives established for individual students and an entire class. The most important functions the team must carry out include but are not limited to: assessing the developmental and functioning levels of all students; developing instructional objectives for individual students; designing and implementing curriculum activities to meet the objectives; evaluating the impact of the program on student performance; developing a classroom environment that encourages learning; recordkeeping; material selection and preparation; and ordering supplies and equipment.

For the teacher to determine how best to integrate the paraeducator into the various elements of instruction and classroom management, the teacher needs to learn about the educational background and work experience of the paraeducator, as well as any special interests and talents the paraeducator may have.

How teachers decide on what tasks to assign to paraeducators will depend on the management and instructional styles of individual teachers. Some teachers may include the paraeducator in the planning process. Other teachers may prefer to develop the plan alone and inform the paraeducator either orally or in writing about weekly and daily schedules, the duties the paraeducator will be expected to perform, and the materials required for various activities.

Directing and Assigning Tasks

It is important for a teacher to understand the distinctions in assigning and delegating tasks in order to avoid the pitfalls of practicing inappropriate delegation or assigning inappropriate tasks to the paraeducator. Directions/assignments may be given orally, in writing, by demonstrating, or a combination of all three techniques. The key to giving effective directions is to make sure that the paraeducator comprehends what is excepted of her or him. Therefore, the teacher must take care to use clear terms and to determine whether or not the pareducator understands what is expected. This may be accomplished by asking the paraeducator to model the skills while the teacher observes, and encouraging the paraeducator to ask questions and share concerns about the nature of the assignment.

Questions Teachers Need to Ask and Answer About Directing and Assigning Tasks

Do I know what functions I expect the paraeducator to perform in the classroom?
When I assign a task to the paraeducator do I describe:

- ✓ What is to be done?
- ✓ Why does it need to be done?
- ✓ What materials will be needed?
- ✓ Who will be doing the job (the teacher, the paraeducator or both the teacher and the paraeducator)?
- ✓ How do I want it to be done?
- ✓ Where will the task be performed?
- ✓ How will student performance be monitored and assessed?

To carry out their assigned duties effectively **paraeducators will need to know**:

1. **WHY** is it necessary to perform this particular task?
2. **WHAT** is needed to do the job (equipment, material)?
3. **WHO** will be doing the job (the paraeducator, the teacher, or both the teacher and paraeducator)?
4. **WHERE** the task will be performed?
5. **WHEN** will the task begin and end?
6. **HOW** will the task be performed (teaching methods, reinforcers, and other techniques)?
7. **HOW** the progress of the students will be monitored and assessed?
8. **HOW** the performance of the paraeducator will be monitored?

Delegating

Sometimes teachers will find it beneficial to delegate tasks. Teachers have the overall responsibility for getting the teaching/learning job accomplished successfully. It is also true that teachers may require different levels of assistance to ensure that educational goals and objectives for students are achieved. Data about student functioning levels and performance must be gathered and assessed, records maintained, and necessary supplies and equipment must be available. Delegation means giving another person the responsibility for completing a task and using his/her own judgement as to whether the task has been performed properly. The delegator is still responsible for the administration, oversight, and conduct of the task.

Questions Teachers Might Ask and Answer About Delegating Tasks

- Have I determined that the paraeducator is ready to take on the responsibility?
- Am I prepared to give the paraeducator the necessary authority to perform the task?
- Have I determined how I will monitor the performance of the paraeducator?
- Do I avoid inappropriate delegation?

It is critical that a decision to delegate a responsibility be made consciously and planned for carefully. Otherwise inappropriate delegation is likely to occur. Both are common problems in the classroom and often lead to paraeducator or other support personnel performing tasks that are unfair to them and to the students. An example of an inappropriate assignment is asking a paraeducator to deal with a difficult student almost exclusively so the teacher can spend his/her time with students who can "really learn and benefit from the teacher's knowledge and skills." Inappropriate delegation happens when a teacher does not adequately explain what is expected of the paraeducator and the paraeducator carves out his/her own place in the classroom by making decisions about what to do and how to do it.

Some teachers may not feel comfortable delegating because they really don't understand how to determine what to delegate, or the benefits of delegating. In addition, as noted previously, teachers may have a variety of reasons for real concerns about delegating any part of the instructional process. These blocks can and should be overcome because effective, appropriate delegation can assure:

- that the paraeducator's existing skills will be used well;
- that motivation will be improved;
- that teachers will have more time for evaluating student needs, planning programs and assessing the results of the instruction on student performance; and
- that the teacher's time will be used more efficiently for the benefit of students.

Guidelines for Utilizing Paraeducators

- The paraeducator's role is not to reduce the professional's workload. If the supervisor and paraeducator are working well together and the paraeducator is making a positive contribution to the routines, the instructional benefit provided by the licensed teacher can be extended to more students and made more salient for all of the students.
- Supervising professionals should make suggestions of the specific content of the training programs for paraeducators to the person(s) responsible for providing inservice.
- Paraeducators should not be given confidential information unless it is accompanied with instruction as to how it is to be used and the legal requirements for maintaining confidentiality.
- Paraeducators should not be required to mark or score any papers that require a qualitative judgement; objective tests, with a "key" provided by the teacher, may be scored by paraeducators.

- Supervising professionals should be involved in the interviewing and selection process when hiring paraeducators.
- In most cases, paraeducators will be assigned to one supervising professional. In some instances, notably in secondary schools, a teacher may not have the opportunity to work closely with one paraeducator assigned to his/her own room. In a few cases, a department may share a paraeducator who frequently works outside of the classroom.

Qualities of A Good Paraeducator as Observed by the Supervisor

- likes all students;
- is interested in helping to provide for individual needs;
- listens to students, supports, and reassures them; and
- works closely with the supervising professional in learning about each student's interests, abilities, and special needs.

As students tend to identify with adults in their environment, the paraeducator must remember that he/she is a model. Students will imitate health habits, posture, grooming, facial expressions, mannerisms, and verbal speech patterns.

A paraeducator provides an extra pair of hands and legs, an extra pair of eyes and ears; when viewed as a member of the educational team, the paraeducator can be one of the most valuable resources in the school.

Summary of Suggestions to the Supervising Teacher

The responsibilities of the supervising teacher have evolved and changed to include the following:

- The teacher needs to develop strategies necessary to create the integration of pareducators into the educational team.
- The implementation of the goals by the teacher, and a plan to achieve these goals in conjunction with the paraeducator will enable the team to motivate student development and creativity.
- Teachers need to familiarize themselves with the paraeducators educational background and experience prior to directing, assigning and delegating tasks.
- When directing, assigning, and delegating responsibility, it is essential that the team members understand the goals of the task and are comfortable implementing the goals.

Job Performance Evaluations

Ensuring Paraeducator Involvement in the Evaluation Process

Evaluation of a paraeducator's job performance is an important process. If approached in a professional manner, it provides information upon which the supervisor can make decisions about effective utilization of the paraeducator within the educational setting. It provides the supervisor an opportunity to utilize the observations made of the paraeducator for suggesting professional development activities. The goal is to utilize formal evaluation results as baseline data that paraeducators can use in designing their own professional growth plans. The evaluation process also allows the supervisor to give the paraeducator additional feedback, in summary form, about the strengths and needs observed incidentally during the course of the year.

The supervisor should provide written feedback of observations of the paraeducator's interactions with students and other adults. Remember to point out the positive things that are observed. In order to shape the behavior of another adult, it is essential to point out to him/her what it is that he/she is "doing right." He/she will then continue to refine those skills in the future. Critical antecedent and consequent events that you may want to observe can be found on the *Coaching Feedback* form included in Appendix D-7).

Observe the paraeducator on a regular basis several times a week. Use incidental observations so that the paraeducator equates the observations as "coaching" or "peer mentoring" strategies rather than just supervisory or evaluative in nature. Utilizing the feed back provided via incidental observations gathered on a weekly basis will allow the supervisor to evaluate the paraeducator without utilizing planned observations which are often stressful for adults.

Provide verbal feedback to the paraeducator. Express appreciation and convey to the paraeducator that his/her contributions are valued. Modeling praise of other adults provides an excellent role model for the students as well. Use descriptive statements about the specific behaviors or activities when praising the paraeducator. Examples include:

- "Barb, you did such a nice job presenting those cue cards. Your pacing was quick and variable, which really made Sam pay attention."
- "Barb, you were so prepared for that lesson. Not a minute was wasted on getting materials, finding the worksheets, or referring to the lesson plans."

When it is necessary to correct the paraeducator or provide feedback that is not entirely positive in nature, be sure to point out the positive aspects of the interaction or activity that was observed. The correction should be specific to the behavior or activity of the paraeducator and not viewed as a personal criticism. Examples include:

- "Barb, I know that you were trying to help Sam by pointing out that he had made an error, but I think he really viewed your comment as a negative statement about his abilities. In the future, try to use a phrase such as "Sam, you are doing such a good job on these math problems but let's take a look at this one."

- "Barb, you are so conscientious about supervising the students. I can see that you are trying to be helpful, but we have to remember to allow the students to try parts of the activity on their own; otherwise we will not be able to see progress as they develop the skill."

Provide regular opportunities to sit down and plan with the paraeducator. Include paraeducators in the design of lesson plans and plans for individual students. It is important that paraeducators are involved in the decision making relative to expectations that will be placed on them. It is much easier to supervise an adult when the expectations are understood and there is mutual agreement about the appropriateness of the expectation. Suggested planning sessions should be held at least weekly.

Why Evaluate?

There are several reasons for evaluating the performance of paraeducators. Although the priorities established by school districts vary, the reasons for formal evaluations fall into the categories listed below:

- to identify the individual and collective training needs of paraeducators for the purpose of planning staff development activities to enhance the quality of the educational programs;
- to modify the work objectives and behavior patterns of the paraeducators for the purpose of improving job performance;
- to communicate expectations of the school, the teachers, supervisors, and administrators, to the paraeducator;
- to assess the quality of the performance of the paraeducator for the purposes of making decisions about retention, promotion, and pay;
- to assist the paraeducators in designing professional development plans; and
- to review progress made over time by the paraeducator in accomplishing professional development outcomes.

Obviously the purposes of the evaluation need to be established prior to the development and implementation of the means for evaluating paraeducators. The instrumentation form, including the criteria, the response system, and the procedures, should be consistent with the local school district.

What are the Conditions of the Evaluation?

The pareducators to be evaluated, the supervisors, and those who receive the evaluation results must be aware of the conditions of personnel evaluations. The conditions become the reference from which evaluation procedures are designed, implemented, and judged by participants. The accepted conditions should be documented and available to all concerned either in the evaluation instrument or in the policy statements that support the evaluation procedures. Listed below are ten commonly accepted principles of personnel evaluation for educators.

1. Personnel evaluation policies, procedures, criteria and instruments should be developed for the particular school setting in the interest of relevance to the expectations and circumstances unique to that setting.

2. All personnel involved – evaluators, paraeducators and the recipients of the evaluations- should be informed about the evaluation system, including the purposes, the conditions, the instrumentation, the procedures, the respective roles of those involved and the uses of the findings prior to the implementation of the evaluation.

3. Evaluation procedures and results are enhanced when those being evaluated are actively involved in the process, therefore, pre-evaluation and post-evaluation conferences are desirable to ensure that paraeducators are aware of expectations, judgments thereof, and the behavior changes desired by the evaluators.

4. Evaluations should be made on numerous occasions over an extended period of time, with each observation for an appropriate amount of time.

5. Judgments, ratings and recommendations should be made in a manner to minimize emotions and insecurities of both the paraeducator and the evaluators. Those being evaluated should be afforded the opportunity to explain the rationale for those behaviors observed and judged.

6. The evaluator should provide specific suggestions for improvement and assistance to the paraeducator in cases where remediation is deemed necessary.

7. The better the evaluation process, the more likely it is to ensure civil due process, e.g., to protect persons from arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable procedures; thus evaluations should:

   - be achieved in a nondiscriminatory manner;
   - incorporate policies and procedures duly promulgated, known to all affected, and demonstrably relevant to the position being evaluated;
   - provide procedures for a hearing or review by an impartial group;
   - provide an opportunity for appeal; and
   - document and make available all observations to the person being evaluated.

What should be the Instrumentation of the Evaluation?

The instrument used in the evaluation is usually comprised of three parts: the criteria to be evaluated; the response system to be completed by the evaluator, and the supporting information requested in the form of concerns, suggestions for improvement, strengths, etc. The criteria, in whatever form, become the expectations of the paraeducator and thus are the most important part of the evaluation process. Thus, local schools are encouraged to develop their own criteria references and response systems in the interest of ensuring relevance to the job.

The following section consists of three parts: the form, the criteria and the response system of the evaluation instrument, complemented by a brief discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each.

The Form

The *form* of the instrumentation is generally a checklist, a narrative, a job target, or some combination thereof. The checklist approach is the most common. It is a listing of the criteria deemed relevant for the position being evaluated on which the evaluator rates the performance of the paraeducator for each item.

The narrative format, a non-scaled response method, is sometimes called the "blank sheet of paper" approach, since the evaluator determines the concerns, strengths, and recommendations based upon immediate observations of the paraeducator's performance.

The job target, or performance-oriented method, is a three-step approach. Step one is initiated by a conference in which the evaluator and paraeducator review the job responsibilities, identify specific goals, develop means by which to judge the degree to which they are achieved and establish dates for observation. Step two is achieved through periodic meetings and observations to ascertain progress and problems in achieving targeted performances. In step three, the evaluator and the paraeducator confer to assess the extent to which the paraeducator has achieved targeted performances.

A combination of several methods of evaluation is perhaps the most suitable approach for evaluating special education paraeducators. In applying this approach the instrument could include a checklist that presents the minimal conditions necessary for satisfactory performance, and a modified performance-oriented approach in which the evaluator and/or the paraeducator identify target areas for improvement, and a section in which the evaluator identifies the major strengths of the paraeducator for reinforcement purposes.

The Criteria

The *criteria* or job-related responsibilities and behaviors to be observed and judged are the most important ingredients in the evaluation process. Certainly, those responsible for choosing or developing procedures for evaluating paraeducators will want to have input about the choice of items. A listing of items commonly included in evaluating special education paraeducators is given in the samples in Appendix D.

A review of the samples suggests the importance of selecting only those criteria references that are relevant and important to the performance of paraeducators. Additionally, those who select items should be concerned about achieving a reasonable balance among personal characteristics, classroom management skills, instructional skills, attending behaviors, and professional growth in order to avoid unintended weightings.

The Response System

The *response system* format, though one of the least important facets in the evaluation process, remains significant since the person being evaluated may be number, letter, or scale conscious. It is for this reason that evaluators are urged to consider the advantages of verbal, non-scaled response systems. Listed below are response systems frequently used in personnel evaluations.

1. Numerical or letter oriented scales in which the evaluator rates items on a scale of A through F (with A being high) or 1 through 5 (or more).

2. Verbal oriented in which the evaluator rates items as "superior," "adequate," "needs improvement" or "excellent," "outstanding," "satisfactory" or "yes" and "no," etc.

3. Paraeducators are made aware of who is evaluating them for what responsibilities in order that they can fulfill expectations adequately. Though the decision as to who should evaluate paraeducators will depend on particular school circumstances and may involve multiple evaluators, the immediate supervisor of the paraeducator should actively participate in the process.

4. Regardless of the form of the instrument by which paraeducators are evaluated – the checklist, the narrative, the target format, or some combination – the determination of criteria or behaviors to be observed is the single most important facet of the evaluation process since it communicates the expectations to be performed and judged.

5. Even though checklist type evaluations are an efficient means to communicate expectations and judgments about the achievement thereof, the necessity that evaluators identify concerns, complemented by specific recommendations for the paraeducator's improvement, will increase significantly the likelihood of the paraeducator's improved on-the-job performance.

6. The procedures, including instrumentation, by which the evaluation of paraeducators is to be accomplished should be documented and explained to them prior to their application, in the interests of instructional improvement and program quality.

The response system should be aligned with the criteria to be evaluated. Again, it is desirable to use a combination of evaluation instruments. Finally, if the purpose of the evaluation is the improvement of the performance of the paraeducator, evaluators are advised to suggest areas in need of improvement and to list the specific means by which improvement is evidenced.

Completing the Process

The evaluation process entails more than the establishment of purposes, conditions, evaluators and instrumentation discussed previously. Decisions need to be made, documented and disseminated as to the specific procedures by which the evaluation of special education paraeducators is to be achieved. This information should be detailed in supporting policy statements, or in the instruments itself, and made available to all concerned – the evaluators, the paraeducators, and those who receive the results of the evaluation. Among the items to be considered are:

- the dates and frequency of evaluations;
- conferencing procedures;
- notices to paraeducators regarding forthcoming evaluations;
- the distribution of completed evaluations; and
- review and appeal procedures.

Summary: Job Performance Evaluations

The evaluation of special education paraeducators can be a most effective supervisory and administrative tool to enhance the quality of program and instructional performance, if implemented in the spirit of the guiding principles that follow.

1. All involved in the evaluation process, particularly the paraeducators, are apprised of the purposes, the conditions, the instrumentation and the procedures of the evaluation.

2. Evaluations should always involve a two-way communication process.

3. Personnel evaluation procedures are beneficial when:

   - they are developed for a particular school setting;
   - the paraeducators are involved extensively in the process through pre- and post-evaluation conferences;
   - the paraeducators are assured an opportunity to receive and react to specific means by which their performance should be improved;
   - the paraeducators are assured due process with means established for review and appeal; and
   - these conditions are documented and disseminated in policy statements.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Special Education Terms/Legal Terms

Annual Goals – Educational performance to be achieved by a student within one year.

Annual Review – Student with disabilities is required by law to have an educational program that is reviewed each year. A review involves an updating of the student's progress and planning his/her educational programs.

Assistive Technology – Services and equipment that enhance the ability of students to be more efficient and successful.

Audiologist – A specialist who is concerned with studying the nature of hearing, administering hearing tests to detect possible hearing loss, and giving information about hearing aids, training programs, and medical treatment.

Autism – A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has emotional disturbance, as defined in IDEA (Individual with Disabilities Education Act).

Behavior Modification – A technique of changing human behavior, based on a system of positive and negative reinforcement. Emphasis is on observable behaviors and what events precede and follow them.

Cerebral Palsy – A group of conditions caused by brain damage usually occurring before or during birth or during the developmental years. Marked especially by impaired muscle control, language, speech, psychological, or learning problems. There are many types of cerebral palsy and it expresses itself differently in each person.

Confidentiality – Precautions an individual other than the student's parent must take in not revealing information, without consent, about a specific student, to someone who is not directly involved with that student.

Consent – (1) fully informing the parent of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought, in his or her native language, or other mode of communication, (2) the parent understands and agrees in writing to the carrying out the activity for which his or her consent is sought, and the consent describes that activity and lists the records (if any) that will be released and to whom, and (3) the parent understands that the granting of consent is voluntary on the part of the parent and may be revoked at any time.

Deafness – A hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Deaf-Blindness – Concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Down Syndrome- A condition caused by chromosomal abnormality with a number of physical characteristics and varying degrees of mental retardation.

Due Process Hearing – Formal procedure for reviewing disagreements so as to insure that an individual is given an opportunity to present his/her side of an issue to an independent due process hearing officer.

Educational Surrogate Parent – Person assigned to act in place of parents or guardians when a student's parents or guardians are not known or are unavailable, or when a student is a ward of the state. This person functions in the same way a parent or guardian would.

Emotional Disturbance – A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, that adversely affects a child's educational performance: (1) an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or other health factors; (2) an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; (3) inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; (4) a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or (5) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Extended School Year/Day – Purpose is to prevent serious regression of previously learned skills that cannot be regained in a reasonable length of time with the intent being to maintain IEP goals and objectives, not to introduce new skills.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) – Special education and related services are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, without charge. The free appropriate public education meets the standards of the state educational agency including preschool, elementary, or secondary school education and is provided in conformity with an individualized education program requirement of IDEA.

Guardian – A person who has qualified as a guardian of a minor or incapacitated person pursuant to testamentary or court appointment, but excludes one who is merely a guardian ad litem.

Hearing Impairment – An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Individualized Education Program (IEP) – A written document for a student with disabilities that is developed and implemented to meet unique educational needs.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) – Describes procedures to ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled.

Mental Retardation – Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Notice – Mandatory written notice provided to parents before the school's proposal or refusal to initiate or change the student's identification, evaluation, or educational placement. Notice in the parent's native language must also be provided in advance of any scheduled IEP meetings.

Occupational Therapy – Use of purposeful activity with individuals who are limited by physical injury or illness, psychosocial dysfunction, developmental or learning disabilities, poverty and cultural differences, or the aging process with the purpose being to maximize independence, prevent disability, and maintain health. The therapy encompasses evaluation, treatment, and consultation.

Orthopedic Impairment – A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis , bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures). IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Other Health Impairment – Having limited strengths, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that – is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, and sickle cell anemia and adversely affects a child's educational performance. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Physical Therapy – The art and science of a health specialty concerned with the prevention of disability and the physical rehabilitation for congenital or acquired disabilities resulting from, or secondary to, injury or disease. The practice of physical therapy means the practice of the health specialty, and encompasses physical therapy evaluation, treatment planning, instruction and consultative services.

Procedural Safeguards – Precautions taken to insure that an individual's rights are not denied without due process of law.

Psychologist – A person with an advanced degree who specializes in administering and evaluating psychological tests including intelligence, aptitude, and interest tests. A psychologist could also provide counseling and apply principles of human behavior.

Reevaluations – Required at least every three years for each special education student.

Referral – Initial step in the special education process; referrals for evaluation can be made by anyone associated with the student.

Related Services – Transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as required to assist a student with disabilities to benefit from education, and includes speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapies, recreation, early identification and assessment for diagnostic or evaluation purposes as well as school health services, social work services in schools and parent counseling and training.

Resource Room – An area within a school where individual students may spend part of the day for supplemental help with academics.

Special Education – Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of a student with disabilities.

Specific Learning Disability: A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Speech or Language Impairment – A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Speech Therapy – The process for remediation of speech disorders such as stuttering, lisping, misarticulation, conducted by a qualified speech-language pathologist on a individualized or small group basis.

Traumatic Brain Injury – An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory;

attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgement; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical function; information processing; and speech. The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries induced by birth trauma. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Visual Impairment Including Blindness – An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Ward of the State – "Ward" being synonymous with person for whom a guardian has been appointed. A "minor ward" being a minor for whom a guardian has been appointed solely because of minority.

Special Education Abbreviations

ADD/ADHD – Attention Deficit Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

APE – Adaptive Physical Education

COTA – Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant

CP – Cerebral Palsy

ED – Emotionally Disturbed

ESY – Extended School Year

FAPE – Free Appropriate Public Education

FERPA – Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act

HI – Hearing Impaired

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP – Individualized Education Program

IFSP – Individual Family Service Plan

IQ – Intelligence Quotient

LRE – Least Restrictive Environment

MR – Mentally Retarded or Mental Retardation

NDDPI/DPI – North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Department of Public Instruction

OCR – Office of Civil Rights

OHI – Other Health Impaired

OI – Orthopedically Impaired

OT – Occupational Therapy or Occupational Therapist

PE – Physical Education

PL – Public Law

PT – Physical Therapy or Physical Therapist

ROM – Range of Motion

SLP – Speech Language Pathologist

STO – Short Term Objective

TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury

TDD – Telecommunications Device for the Deaf

VI – Visually Impaired

APPENDIX B

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Suggested Checklist for Principals

School principals play a critical role in supervising and supporting the work of paraeducators. The school principal may use this checklist as a tool for developing appropriate paraeducator services in his or her building.

Consider forming a building or district level committee of administrators, paraeducators, teachers, other building personnel and parents to examine building practices and plan strategies for improving paraeducator services. The committee could use the items on the checklist below or develop a checklist specifically for its school.

Yes	No	
❒	❒	Does our building have guidelines for effective paraeducator services and a code of ethics? Are team members informed about these guidelines and their ethical responsibilities?
❒	❒	Does each paraeducator in the building have a clearly defined role? Has this role been communicated to each team member?
❒	❒	Does each paraeducator in the building have a current and accurate job description?
❒	❒	Do teachers understand their responsibilities for directing the paraeducator(s), giving feedback to the paraeducator, training the paraeducator, scheduling, providing input to personnel evaluations, etc.?
❒	❒	Do paraeducators know who can provide help and support?
❒	❒	Are the responsibilities for supervising the paraeducator(s) clearly defined? Do team members know who is supposed to supervise them and do they understand the role of the supervisor?
❒	❒	Do paraeducators and teachers understand the district evaluation process?
❒	❒	Is there a process for overseeing the team process to ensure that effective practices are being followed?
❒	❒	Is there a process for keeping parents informed about the roles assigned to paraeducators?
❒	❒	Are school newspapers and other correspondence delivered to each paraeducator? Is information about the work of paraeducators included in the newspapers?
❒	❒	Does each paraeducator have the skills needed to meet assignments?

- ❒ ❒ Does our building have a written staff development plan for paraeducators?
- ❒ ❒ Has each newly hired paraeducator received the required inservice training during his or her first year?
- ❒ ❒ Are the staff development needs of paraeducators assessed?
- ❒ ❒ Are paraeducators provided with staff development in basic competencies that most paraeducators need?
- ❒ ❒ Are paraeducators provided with staff development in areas that are specific to their individual assignments?
- ❒ ❒ Do teachers have the skills they need to direct and support paraeducators? If not, are there staff development efforts planned to meet this need?
- ❒ ❒ Is there time built into the schedule for paraeducators to meet with teachers to plan, maintain effective communication, and receive feedback?
- ❒ ❒ Are there written procedures for emergencies? Have staff members been trained in how to respond to emergencies?
- ❒ ❒ Do the paraeducators in our building receive recognition and adequate compensation for the work they do?
- ❒ ❒ Is there anything our faculty can do to assist paraeducators who have a goal to become a teacher or to pursue some other career?
- ❒ ❒ Are paraeducators provided with opportunities to get involved with building and district activities where their input would be valued?

Tips to Include in Orientation Training for Paraeducators

1. **Maintain confidentiality at all times:**
   Do not discuss students or staff in the lounge, in the classrooms, on the playgrounds, at work sites, at social functions, or amongst your friends, family, or co-workers. Discussions of this nature should take place ONLY with your supervisor in a private place. If you find yourself in a situation where you feel uncomfortable about the conversation, leave. If you are asked questions about students, staff, family situations, or things that you are not allowed to discuss, say that you cannot talk about it due to confidentiality. Refer the person to your supervisor.

2. **Regular attendance:**
   If you are ill, let your supervisor know as soon as possible. If you are planning to be absent, please let your supervisor know as soon as possible, so they have time to make other arrangements. Schedule doctor and dental appointments after your work hours, unless it is unavoidable.

3. **Punctuality:**
   Please be on time. Be in your designated work area at the scheduled times and be ready to work. Changes in schedules do occur; when they do, follow your schedules as closely as possible.

4. **Breaks:**
   Breaks may be allotted by your supervisor. A break begins when you leave your work area. Breaks include personal phone calls and bathroom breaks.

5. **Flexibility:**
   Be willing to assume more responsibility when requested. Please step in and take over someone's duties when necessary.

6. **Compromise:**
   Be willing to modify your position on issues relating to students, staff, etc. This will help keep the team cohesive.

7. **Show initiative:**
   Your primary responsibility is to the student(s) you are assigned to assist. However, you may have time and opportunities to help other students and/or teachers. Please do so. Become familiar with the instructional materials that are available for use with students in the classroom or on an individual basis.

8. **Have a positive attitude:**
   Please leave your problems at home. Use scheduled break times or after school times to discuss personal problems. If you have concerns about students, staff, parents, or your job discuss them with your supervisor in a private setting.

9. **Know the boundaries of your authority:**
Your role is to follow through on directions, methods, and management given by the teachers and case managers. They are ultimately responsible and in charge. If you have any questions, need to clarify information, or want more information about your role, please ask your supervisor in private. This will help avoid misunderstandings and maintain confidentiality.

10. **Maintain composure:**
Your tone of voice, volume, facial expressions, gestures and comments are observed by staff, students, visitors to school sites, and the public. Be sure to maintain a calm and professional demeanor in all situations.

11. **Be consistent in behavior management:**
When working with students, consistency is important. Please respond to behavioral concerns in the manner you have been instructed and/or as stated in the student's behavior management plan in ALL settings. DO NOT use physical interventions unless you have been instructed to do so by your supervisor. If you do not understand any aspect of your role, ask!

12. **Professional relationship:**
Your role is to help students become as independent as possible. Establish a professional relationship rather that a "buddy" or "mothering" relationship.

Sample Verification of Training Agreements

These agreements are to be signed by the paraeducator and supervisor after completion of each area of training.

Administrative Policies of Local School District

I have read and reviewed the section on "Administrative Policies" with my supervisor.

Paraeducator's Name:_____
Date:_____

Supervisor's Name:_____
Date:_____

Confidentiality Agreement

I acknowledge that I have:

_____ read the information given to me regarding confidentiality
_____ discussed confidentiality with my supervisor _____
(name)
_____ seen the videotape on confidentiality

I understand the issues related to confidentiality and agree to adhere to the guidelines provided.

Paraeducator's Name:_____
Date:_____

Supervisor's Name:_____
Date:_____

Health and Safety Agreement

I acknowledge that I have:

_____ read the information given to me regarding health and safety

_____ discussed health and safety with my supervisor _____
(name)

_____ seen the videotapes on health and safety

I understand the issues related to health and safety and agree to adhere to the guidelines provided.

Paraeducator's Name:_____

Date:_____

Supervisor's Name:_____

Date:_____

Abuse & Neglect Section

I have read and reviewed the section on "Abuse & Neglect" with my supervisor.

Paraeducator's Name:_____

Date:_____

Supervisor's Name:_____

Date:_____

Emergency Procedures

I have read and reviewed the section on "Emergency Procedures" with my supervisor.

Paraeducator's Name:_____

Date:_____

Supervisor's Name:_____

Date:_____

Infection Control Procedures

I have read and reviewed "Recommended Procedures for Infection Control, Handling Emergency Illness and Accidents at School" with my supervisor.

Paraeducator's Name:_____
Date:_____

Supervisor's Name:_____
Date:_____

OPTIONAL

Lifting Techniques

I have watched the video about correct lifting techniques and have reviewed the information with my supervisor.

Paraeducator's Name:_____
Date:_____

Supervisor's Name:_____
Date:_____

OPTIONAL

Wheelchair Safety

I have read and reviewed the section on "Wheelchair Safety" with my supervisor.

Paraeducator's Name:_____
Date:_____

Supervisor's Name:_____
Date:_____

Local school district policies and procedures relative to paraeducators need to be added here.

APPENDIX C

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL

Competencies for Supervisors of Paraeducators

1. **Interviewing Skills**

2. **Mentoring**
   a. clarifies the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators
   b. delineates lines of authority
   c. demonstrates/models instructional skills behavior

3. **Communication**
   a. applies interpersonal skills
   b. demonstrates effective listening skills
   c. uses team-building skills
   d. exhibits effective written and oral skills to provide team management

4. **Problem Solving**
   a. resolves conflicts
   b. identifies and clarifies a problem
   c. assumes the perspective of another

5. **Motivation Skills**
   a. creates a positive environment
   b. sets achievable goals
   c. rewards goal achievement
   d. shows respect and acknowledges achievement of others
   e. promotes change and growth

6. **Coordinating Skills**
   a. demonstrates time management skills
   b. designs effective meeting strategies
   c. implements scheduling techniques

7. **Delegating Skills**
   a. selects tasks to be delegated based on an individual's competence
   b. clarifies roles and clearly delegates responsibilities
   c. provides constructive feedback to the delegate

8. **Feedback and Evaluation Skills**
   a. monitors the performance of others
   b. provides constructive feedback
   c. participates in formal evaluation process
   d. describes and clarifies evaluation processes and content
   e. participates in individual personnel growth plan
   f. uses appropriate record keeping and documentation

9. **Learning and Professional Development Skills**
   a. demonstrates knowledge of state professional guidelines/regulations/policies regarding employment of paraprofessionals
   b. shares information regarding professional development

Working with Paraeducators

In many schools, the role of the special education teacher has been transformed. In addition to their instructional responsibilities, special education teachers are also acting as supervisors of paraeducators. Special education teachers often supervise at least one paraeducator, and some supervise as many as 20. Recent estimates report that between 250,000 and 280,000 paraeducators work in special education alone, and about 500,000 provide some kind of instructional activity or other direct service to students.

As special education teachers assume the role of supervisory, they may need to learn new skills regarding personnel management and the delegation of responsibility. This shift in responsibility may also require special education teachers to change their beliefs and attitudes about their job.

"The special education teacher must give up some of the control but not the responsibility," said Anna Lou Picket, professor at New York University and member of CEC Chapter #742. "As in any business, the special education teacher must determine what needs to be done and select staff. They must be able to direct, delegate, and assess the quality of performance of the paraeducator."

One of the primary challenges special educators face is determining which duties to assign a paraeducator and which to maintain. Experts agree that special education teachers must perform all professional responsibilities such as diagnosing a child's disability, planning programs to meet the child's identified needs, and developing the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP). They should also determine which adaptations should be made in the classroom, evaluate instructional programs, and assess student performance.

The paraeducators may perform a variety of instructional and noninstructional tasks. They may provide direct instruction to individuals or groups of students following the teacher's guidelines concerning choice of materials and the instructional plan and/or observe and record data. Paraeducators may also perform other duties such as maintaining inventory and ordering supplies.

In addition to defining duties, special education teachers may need to develop a number of other skills to promote a positive working relationship for themselves, the paraeducators, and the students:

Develop and maintain an effective communication system between themselves and paraeducators and among paraeducators. The special educator must ensure the paraeducator knows the goals for each student, which type of behavior management techniques to use for individual students, and why different techniques are used for different children. The special educator must also ensure that he or she is regularly informed of information that conveys the progress of each child.

One teacher who supervises 11 paraeducators devised a system using clipboards to help with communication. Every paraeducator is armed with a clipboard on which he or she has notes, the

goals and objectives, and the kinds of adaptations to use with the children he or she works with. With this information, the paraeducator can make-on-the spot decisions about which adaptations to use. On the same clipboard, the paraeducator has a reporting sheet on which he or she records the skills worked on that day and to what degree the child has mastered those skills.

Special educators should also establish regular meetings with paraeducators. Those meetings can be used to set goals for students, plot instructional strategies, solve problems, or deal with any conflicts between staff.

Be a good delegator. The special educator must decide which tasks or partial tasks to delegate. If the teacher supervises more than one paraeducator, he or she must determine who is best for a particular task.

Provide on-the-job coaching. Some say this is the most important aspect of working with paraeducators, as they often receive little or no preservice training. For on-the-job coaching to be most effective, the special education teacher should evaluate the needs of their students, their program design, the skills of the paraeducator, and the skills the paraeducator needs to have. Special educators may find that they can easily increase a paraeducator's effectiveness by teaching him or her instructional strategies such as how to use questions to elicit information from a child or how to prompt a child. On-the-job coaching also provides an additional benefit in that the educator can feel more confident about the quality of the paraeducator's work, and the paraeducator can be effective in more situations.

Be a good evaluator. As a supervisor, teachers will evaluate paraeducators, either informally or formally. To ensure the evaluations are fair, teachers should observe the paraeducator frequently, according to Nancy French, professor at the University of Colorado, Denver. The teacher's feedback should be specific and honest and include information about what the paraeducator does well, as well as areas that need improvement. Finally, teachers need to be consistent in their expectations and evaluations, particularly in places when more than one paraeducator is on the team.

Advantage of Working with Paraeducators

While turning over some of their direct instruction time to paraeducators changes the roles of the special education teacher, working with these individuals offers may advantages. For instances, using a paraeducator gives special educators more time to plan for their students and perform assessments, as well as consult with colleagues. Paraeducators who are skilled at observation can be an invaluable asset, providing accurate information about whether or not a program is working over a period of months or of changes the teacher may not be aware of. Having a paraeducator in the classroom also gives the special education teacher time to observe what is going on in the class and determine where modifications need to be made. And, last but not least, having another adult in a class makes it possible to provide more students with the 5-10 minutes of personalized attention so many of our students need.

Improper Use of Paraeducators Detrimental to Students with Disabilities

Improper use of paraeducators can negatively affect the instruction, educational advancement, and social development of students with disabilities, according to a study reported in the Fall 1997 Exceptional Children. Researchers identified eight areas in which unnecessary proximity of instructional aides to students with special needs can impede progress. They are:

- The availability of paraeducators can allow professional staff to avoid assuming responsibility and ownership for the education of students with disabilities placed in general education classrooms.
- Paraeducators often separate students with disabilities from the class group.
- Paraeducators in close proximity to students with disabilities may foster dependence on adults.
- Prolonged close proximity of paraeducators to students with disabilities can adversely affect peer involvement.
- Paraducators often do not have the training or instructional knowledge and skill to provide adequate academic instruction to students with disabilities.
- Students who have difficulty communicating may lose personal control when working with paraeducators regularly.
- The student's gender may become secondary to the gender of the paraeducator, e.g., for bathroom use.
- Paraeducator behaviors may interfere with the instruction of other students.

Problems Related to Instructional Assistant Proximity

Inference with Ownership and Responsibility by General Educators

- "I'm not sure how Holly is going to be involved in this activity, but that's her aide's job." (Physical education teacher)
- "The teachers tend to kind of let the individual (assistants) kind of run the program." (Mother of a student with disabilities)

Separation from Classmates

- An instructional assistant waited until all the other students had lined up at the teacher's direction and had filed out of the classroom before prompting the student with disabilities to leave the room, trailing the group by about 10 yards.
- In the middle of an activity, after James had one turn, the instructional assistant quietly removed him from the group while the class continued their activity.

Dependence on Adults

- During a large literacy activity, the instructional assistant had positioned herself near the back of the group, a few feet away from Annie (the student with disabilities). Annie looked away form the teacher and toward her instructional assistant every few seconds as the instructional assistant offered her signed instructions (e.g., look at the teacher, sit down). After a couple of minutes, Annie walked back to the instructional assistant and sat on her lap.

Impact on Peer Interactions

- "A shadow is not necessarily good. It's more of a stigma. I really hadn't considered the fact that Mrs. Kinney (the instructional assistant) is always very close to Jaime, although there are times when she is out on a break or whatever and he is in very capable hands with his peers. I think it would be better to have her integrated more in the classroom and maybe not feel that she needs to hover so much. "(Classroom teacher)
- "It (close proximity of instructional assistants) may be kind of intimidating to them (peers). It may sort of be a barrier to them interacting with him." (Speech/language pathologist)

Limitations on Receiving Competent Instruction

- In attempting to use discrimination learning to teach the difference between named objects, pictures, symbols, or colors, lessons yield little because the instructional assistants demonstrated limited knowledge or application of basic instructional design issues such as position bias, use of negative exemplars/distracters, and establishing mastery criteria prior to introducing new items.

Loss of Personal Control

- Did Holly really want to eat lunch apart from her classmates in a separate room? Did Helen really want to play the math game with an adult rather than a classmate like all the other students were doing?

Loss of Gender Identity

- Loss of gender identity was most commonly observed in reference to bathroom use when a male student was taken into a woman's bathroom by a female instructional assistant.

Interference with Instruction of Other Students

- An occupational therapist reported that the students without disabilities were more distracted by the instructional assistant doing different activities than by the "noises" of the students with disabilities.

APPENDIX D

JOB PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

SAMPLE FORM 1

PARAEDUCATOR EVALUATION REPORT

Paraeducator_____ Date_____

School_____ Grade Level_____

Supervisor_____

After each of the items listed below, indicate your rating of the paraeducator by checking the appropriate level on the scale to the right. It is expected that only rarely will the paraeducator consistently rate either the top or the bottom of the scale. Please comment briefly on the strengths and weaknesses of the paraeducator's present ability to undertake a permanent position as compared with your conception of the average beginning paraeducator. Included below each item are sample subheadings which may be considered in evaluation.

I. CONFIDENTIALITY

Poor Fair Excellent

__ __ __

Comments:

Paraeducator maintains confidentiality of students, parents, classroom teachers, and other team members.

II. PLANNING AND PREPARATION OF ACTIVITIES

__ __ __

Comments:

Learning activities evidence carefully shared planning. Activities directed to accomplishing worthy objectives which are clear-cut, capable of achievement. The paraeducator is aware of, and provides for, individual differences in the group assigned by teacher.

III. USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

__ __ __

Comments:

Paraeducator varies approaches appropriately and makes use of a variety of techniques. Is able to acquire and use cues from students, and makes use of a feedback process. Paraeducator strives for maximum pupil participation.

IV. USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

__ __ __

Comments:

Pareducator makes appropriate and effective use of multi-sensory materials, such as audio-visual aids and laboratory equipment, where applicable.

V. GROUP MANAGEMENT

__ __ __

Comments:

Pareducator manages discipline constructively.

VI. RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS

__/__/__

Comments:

Paraeducator receives respect from students. He/she willingly gives help and assistance to students. He/she gives praise or positive reinforcement to students. Paraeducator is skillful in communication with students and respects and listens to students.

VII. PERSONAL QUALITIES

__/__/__

Comments:

Paraeducator shows dependability. He/she exhibits favorable personal appearance. Paraeducator shows good relationship with faculty. Paraeducator's use of voice (timbre, quality) is appropriate.

VIII. SUPPORTIVE SKILLS

__/__/__

Comments:

Paraeducator demonstrates skills in completing tasks accurately, and on time.

IX. PROFESSIONALISM

__/__/__

Comments:

Paraeducator demonstrates a genuine interest in improving his/her ability and exhibits positive attitude toward self-improvement. He/she shows awareness of the materials.

X. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER TEAM MEMBERS

__/__/__

Comments:

Pareducator provides input to other team members regarding student performance, likes, dislikes, etc. He/she asks questions and offers suggestions.

Other Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Teacher/Supervisor _____ Date _____

Paraeducator _____ Date _____

Principal _____ Date _____

SAMPLE FORM 2

PARAEDUCATOR EVALUATION

Name:_____ Date_____

Experience:_____

SUMMARY STATEMENT:_____

_____

_____

		Acceptable	Needs Improvement
I.	**Professional Characteristics:**		

The Paraeducator:

1. behaves in a manner consistent with accepted ethical standards
2. adapts to and/or is flexible in new situation and task
3. accepts supervision and guidance
4. cooperates with teacher and co-workers
5. displays interest and enthusiasm in teacher
6. Other:_____

Comments:_____

_____

		Acceptable	Needs Improvement
II.	**Instructional Program Components:**		

The Paraeducator:

1. engages students in activities clearly related to program objectives
2. plans well
3. works effectively in a group setting
4. has effective classroom management skills
5. establishes and maintains an effective classroom environment
6. interacts courteously with students
7. has effective communication skills
8. Other_____

Comments:_____

_____

Summary & Goals

A. Strengths/Effective Patterns

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Areas to Improve/Ineffective Patterns

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Growth Objectives

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Signature of Paraeducator (date) Signature of Evaluator (date)

SAMPLE FORM 3

PARAEDUCATOR EVALUATION

Name_____

Assignment_____

Completed By_____

Date_____

1-Unacceptable
2-Needs Improvement
3-Effective Performance
4-Outstanding

NOTE: In evaluations where unacceptable, needs improvement, or outstanding is checked, evaluators must add explanatory comments.

SECTION I: TO BE COMPLETED BY ADMINISTRATOR AND SUPERVISING TEACHER

		1	2	3	4
1.	Instructional Skills and Techniques				
	a. Effective ability to communicate subject matter	___	___	___	___
	b. Use of effective teacher-directed techniques	___	___	___	___
	c. Adaptability to the needs of each individual student	___	___	___	___
	Comments:_____				
2.	Classroom Management Skills	1	2	3	4
	a. Organization and effective direction of pupil activities	___	___	___	___
	b. Ability to maintain classroom control as directed by the supervising teacher	___	___	___	___
	Comments:_____				
3.	Professional Characteristics	1	2	3	4
	a. General acceptance of responsibilities	___	___	___	___
	b. Response to supervision and constructive suggestions	___	___	___	___
	c. Effectiveness in implementing the students' educational program	___	___	___	___
	d. Maintains professional rapport with supervising teacher, individual students, and other school personnel	___	___	___	___
	e. Appropriate role model for students	___	___	___	___
	f. Positive attitude toward instructing students	___	___	___	___
	g. Reliability and punctuality	___	___	___	___
	Comments:_____				

SECTION II: TO BE COMPLETED BY EVALUATOR(S) AND PARAEDUCATOR

1. Employee objective(s), established cooperatively with the administrator and supervising teacher, to be implemented by the next evaluation period.

2. Evaluation of previous objective(s).

Comments:_____

_____
Coordinator's Signature

_____
Supervising Teacher's Signature

Name _____

Assignment _____

S-Satisfactory
U-Unsatisfactory

Note: In those evaluations where unsatisfactory is checked, it is required that the evaluators add explanatory comments.

SECTION III: TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL ADMINISTRATOR.

1. Classroom Management Skills	S	U
a. Ability to maintain effective teacher-directed classroom control	____	____
b. Effective direction of pupil activities	____	____

Comments: _____

_____

2. Professional Characteristics	S	U
a. Attendance and punctuality	____	____
b. Appropriate role model for students	____	____
c. Positive attitude toward instructing students	____	____
d. Maintains professional rapport with students, supervising teacher, and other school personnel	____	____
e. Conformance with authorized policies and procedures	____	____

Comments: _____

_____

SECTION IV: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARAEDUCATOR.

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____
Paraeducator Signature

3. List of descriptors in which the evaluator indicates the degree to which a paraeducator demonstrates competence such as:

(check those achieved)

____uses visual aids appropriately
____prepares appropriate visual aids
____uses visual equipment effectively
____other, describe as observed

4. Open-ended, non-scaled systems in which the evaluator, sometimes in cooperation with the paraeducator identifies specific goals that need to be achieved as well as the means of achieving them such as:

goal: _____

_____

achievement means: _____

_____

_____

-OR-

identifies **commendations, concerns**, and **recommendations for improvement** in the spaces provided. (Note: For each concern, there should be a specific recommendation for improvement.)

Commendations	**Concerns**	**Recommendations**

Sample Form

STAFF COACHING FEEDBACK

TEACHER: **INSTRUCTIONAL SETTING:**
OBSERVER: **STUDENTS:**
DATE: **NATURE OF LESSON:**

Instructional Indicators

Session Preparation: (Materials, Learning Environment, Promptness)

Curriculum/Content:

Program Design: (Task Analysis, Concept Analysis, Design)

Lesson Presentation: (Anticipatory Set, Instructional Prompts, Methods Used, Materials Used)

Instructional Trials: (Frequency of trials, Appropriateness of Practice, Pacing, Flow)

Individualization:

Appropriateness to Learner Needs:

Program Evaluation: (Learner Feedback, Modifications based on learner progress)

Documentation:

School Indicators
Shared Purposes and Mission:

Collegiality:

Structure:

Continuous Improvement:

Professional Indicators
Collaboration:

Reflection:

Research:

Written Reports:

Professional Conduct/Collaboration:

APPENDIX E

PARAEDUCATOR PORTFOLIO
(To be developed locally.)

PARAEDUCATOR TRAINING

Sample Letter of Verification

This is to verify that _____ has completed training in the following competency areas:

Competency Area		Hours Required	Hours Received	Date
1.3	Orientation Training	5	_____	_____
1.4.1	The Implementation of Effective Paraeducator Practices in Educational Settings	3	_____	_____
1.4.2.	Student Support Concepts	3	_____	_____
1.4.3.	Human Growth and Development	3	_____	_____
1.4.4.	Utilizing Effective Instructional Strategies to Serve Students with Disabilities in Integrated Settings	3	_____	_____
1.4.5.	Strengthening Behaviors	3	_____	_____
1.6	Additional Topics List Specific Topic:	4 hrs annually	_____	_____

Date Training Completed_____

Signature of Trainer_____

Signature of Paraeducator_____

SAMPLE PARAEDUCATOR TRAINING/INSERVICE RECORD

Name _____

Location(s) _____

Position _____

Training/Inservice (describe)	Location	Date	Time	Initials

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

I. Paraeducator's Name:

Social Security No.

FTE:

Supervisor:

II. Description of the situation that requires the hiring of the paraeducator.

III. Job Description (Specific duties to be carried out by the paraeducator):

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR PARAEDUCATORS

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

I. Paraeducator's Name:

Social Security No.

FTE: 1.0 (Note: full time is 6 hrs/day, 5 days/week)

Supervisor: (Special Education Staff Member)

II. Description of the situation that requires the hiring of the paraeducator.

A student with multiple disabilities (autistic, non-verbal) enrolled in the classroom requires one-to-one attention throughout the day.

III. Job Description (Specific duties to be carried out by the paraeducator):

1. Assist the student mentioned above with toileting.
2. Assist the student mentioned above with dressing.
3. Assists the student mentioned above with feeding upon request of the instructor.
4. Implement above-mentioned student's communication program.
5. Implement prescribed behavior management program for student mentioned above.
6. Assist with activities of the prescribed programs including those written by related service personnel such as PT, OT and Speech.
7. Supervise cafeteria or recess as assigned by building administrator, particularly to supervise the needs of the above-mentioned student.
8. Supervise students in teacher planned activity.
9. Chart individual progress of students under the direction and supervision of the classroom teacher.
10. Prepare instructional materials.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

I. Paraeducator's Name:

Social Security No.

FTE: .92 (Note: full time is 6 hrs/day, 5 days/week)

Supervisor: (Special Education Staff Member)

II. Description of the situation that requires the hiring of the paraeducator.

The preschool program has 1 student who requires one-on-one behavior management. The paraeducator assists as described below in the preschool program as necessary.

III. Job Description (Specific duties to be carried out by the paraeducator):

1. Assists in conducting individual sessions and small group sessions with students from the preschool program in review of skills from class lessons and/or IEP objectives.
2. Completes some of the charting for the IEP objectives on individual sessions.
3. Helps to keep children on task for the programs taught by the supervisor.
4. Conducts lessons when the supervisor is working individually or with other student groups. Example: Centers.
5. Supervise preschool phy ed daily.
6. Prepares materials used in the preschool programs.
7. Supervise and assist students when included into general education classes.
8. Assist students in self-care activities including toileting needs.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

NAME: FULL TIME EQUIVALENCY: .95

SUPERVISOR:

LOCATION:

DISABILITY AREA: Orthopedically Impaired/Visually Impaired

DESCRIPTION OF UNIQUE SITUATION OR NEED OF STUDENTS:

The paraeducator is needed to provide assistance to 1 child with severe spastic cerebral palsy, who is confined to a wheelchair. She requires help with feeding, toileting, therapy needs, communication and other basic needs.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Listed below are tasks of which the paraeducator may perform:

1. Present concepts that are presented by the teacher in a manner that will be helpful to the student (e.g., Making things larger so she can see them, bringing them closer, having a copy in front of the student)
2. Make communication aids that will allow the student to communicate her thoughts effectively.
3. Modify work so that the student can benefit from all concepts presented.
4. Work closely with the classroom teacher so that they are getting the same information to the student.
5. Supervise student in lunchroom and playground activities, music and PE.
6. Help TEAM to make decisions on what will work with the student.
7. Bring student to Physical Therapy and Speech Therapy when scheduled.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

Name:

Location:

Supervisor:

Job Description:

1. Assist general education classroom teachers in the inclusion of students with disabilities into their classrooms.
2. Establish a positive and supportive relationship with the classroom teachers.
3. Work with individuals or groups of students under the direct supervision of the teacher in the general education classroom or the Primary Case Manager.
4. Provide clerical assistance (type materials, duplicate materials, make instructional games, etc.) for the teacher or the Primary Case Manager .
5. Assist in instructional classroom duties, toileting, snack/lunch, clothing routines, etc.
6. Assist in supervision of students (both disabled and nondisabled) during recess and lunch periods.
7. Implement behavior management techniques (reinforcing appropriate behavior in accordance with the teacher's plan, supervising timeout, etc.)
8. Be involved in student staffings (upon requests).
9. Observe and records academic behavior and progress.
10. Observe and record social behavior.
11. Give informal tests to students.
12. Other duties assigned by casemanager/supervisor.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

Name:

Location:

Supervisor:

Description of Unique Need: Work with students with EMH/TMH and SMH under the direct supervision of the teachers in the general education classrooms and the special education resource teachers.

Job Description:

1. Follow through with IEP objectives including math, reading, speech and developing independent skills.
2. Assist general education classroom teachers in integrating students into general education classrooms.
3. Communicate pertinent information to teachers.
4. Collect data.
5. Accompany students on community experiences; may transport students in their own vehicles.
6. Respect student confidentiality.
7. Assist in supervision of students during recess periods.
8. Assist with PT program developed by the physical therapist.
9. Assist in toileting students.
10. Implement behavior management techniques in accordance with the directions given by PCM.
11. Other duties as assigned by supervisors.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

NAME: FULL-TIME EQUIVALENCY: 1.00

LOCATION: DISABILITY AREA: RESOURCE ROOM

SUPERVISOR:

The Resource Room Paraeducator will be responsible to carry out the following:

1. Work on special programs with an individual or small group as set-up by Resource Room Teacher.
2. Reinforce concepts presented by the teacher.
3. Listen and read to students.
4. Help students with assignments.
5. Observe and record academic behavior and progress of student.
6. Informal assessment with the Resource Room Teachers.
7. Make and locate instructional games and materials.
8. Type and duplicate materials.
9. Attend IEP meetings and inservice.
10. Supervise computer activities.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

NAME: FULL-TIME EQUIVALENCY: .75

SUPERVISOR: DISABILITY AREAS: SLD

LOCATION:

A DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIQUE SITUATION OR NEED OF THE CHILD WHICH REQUIRES THE HIRING OF THE PARAEDUCATOR:

This paraeducator is needed to provide support to elementary aged children with disabilities through the Resource Room and the general education classroom settings. She aids the Learning Disabilities teacher, classroom teachers, and students in the schools 5 days a week. Her duties are listed below:

1. Drill work and supplement activities after instruction by classroom or resource room instructors.
2. Supervise study groups.
3. Implement individual skills according to IEP specifications.
4. Supervise students during test situations.
5. Assist on field trips.
6. Correct papers and help with record keeping.
7. Tape student lessons.
8. File papers.
9. Photocopy materials.
10. Type IEP's.
11. Develop study guides.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

NAME:

SUPERVISOR:

LOCATION:

AMOUNT OF TIME REQUIRED: 7 hours daily for 180 days

DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIQUE SITUATION: This paraeducator is being utilized to assist in the management and instruction of a student with complex special education needs. He is currently carrying disability diagnosis of Other Health Impaired, SED, and LD. This position is required to promote successful integration within a general education classroom.

A. Is responsible to specific direction and supervision of the classroom teacher and the EH consultants.

B. May work with the student individually or in a small group, under the direction of the classroom teacher and the EH consultants, in the development of specific skills as specified through the IEP process.

C. Assists the general education classroom teachers in monitoring the student's understanding of directions, concepts, timelines for assignments, etc.

D. Assists in the development of independent skills as outlined through the IEP process.

E. Assists in monitoring behavior management programs as established by the student's IEP planning team.

F. Maintains a positive attitude within the classroom, providing encouragement and reinforcement to the children.

G. Maintains a positive relationship with students, teachers, and parents.

H. Strictly adheres to confidentiality requirements regarding all matters pertaining to students, parents, parent communications, and/or classroom activities.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

I. Paraeducator's Name:

Social Security No.

FTE: 1.0 (Note: full time is 6 hrs/day, 5 days/week)

Supervisor: (Special Education Staff Member)

II. Description of the situation that requires the hiring of the paraeducator.

There is a student (Student A) in this program who has multiple disabilities. The student requires one-to-one instruction and one-to-one monitoring for behavior in the classroom. The paraeducator also assists with one-to-one instruction and supervision of other students.

III. Job Description (Specific duties to be carried out by the paraeducator):

1. Paraeducator monitor's Student A's behavior in the classroom.
2. Paraeducator provides assistance and supervision for individual students upon request, especially Student A.
3. Chart individual progress under the direction and supervision of the classroom instructor.
4. Accompany Student A to all activities outside of the classroom.
5. Supervise students (primarily Student A) in teacher planned activities.
6. Implement prescribed programs including those written by related service personnel.
7. Attend student staffings upon request.
8. Communicate with Student A's parents through a daily notebook.
9. Implement prescribed behavior management problems.

PARAEDUCATOR: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

Name:

Location:

Supervisor:

Personal Requirement:

1. Appropriate dress for school and vocational community sites.
2. Keeping all student/teacher work, files, meeting etc. confidential.
3. Maintaining a positive attitude.
4. Adjusting to a variety of teacher/student/employer personalities and abilities.
5. Adjusting to schedule changes, variety of activities, and changes in teaching locations.

Responsibilities Include:

1. Job coaching at community sites.
2. Transportation to and from job sites.
3. Assisting teaching in classroom (small group, one-on-one instruction, etc.) as it relates to job readiness and independent living.
4. Assisting students with personal hygiene needs as required.
5. Other duties as assigned.

APPENDIX G

RESOURCES

Resources

Ashbaker, Betty Y., Morgan, Jill, and Henderson, Hyrum. The Effective Educator: A Training Program for Paraeducators. CPD Technology Division, Utah State University, Logan, Utah 1995.

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Common Core Competencies for Paraeducators (Draft Copy). Reston, Virginia 1997.

Dover, Wendy. The Personal Planner and Training Guide for the Paraprofessional. The Master Teacher Inc, Manhattan, Kansas 1996.

Enhancing the Skills of Paraeducators: A Video-assisted Training Program. Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, Utah State University, Logan, Utah 1994.

Gerlack, Kent. Communication and Team Building. Pacific Training Associates, Seattle, Washington 1998.

Giangreco, M.F., Edelman, S.W., Luiselli, T.E., and MacFarland. S.Z.C. Helping or Hovering? Effects of Instructional Assistant Proximity on Students with Disabilities. Exceptional Children Vol. 64, No. 1, pages 7-18, Fall 1997.

Hammeken, Peggy A. Inclusion: An Essential Guide for the Paraprofessional. Peytral Publications, Minnetonka, Minnesota 1996.

Handbook for Training Instructional Assistants. Bismarck Public Schools, Special Education Study Group on Supervising Instructional Assistants. Bismarck, North Dakota 1996.

Harris, Dana R. The Assistant Handbook: A Quality Guide for the Quality Assistant. Richmond County Public Schools Staff Development Department. Augusta, Georgia 1996.

Hoover, John. Simanton, Ed., and Milner, Carole. The Roles of Paraeducators in North Dakota: Views of Principals, Paras, and Teachers. Bureau of Educational Services and Allied Research. The University of North Dakota – Grand Forks, North Dakota 1998.

Inservice Training Manual for Special Education Program Assistants. Illinois State Board of Education, Department of Special Education 1986.

Iowa Department of Education. Guide for Effective Paraeducator Practices in Iowa, 1998.

North Dakota Paraeducator Training Project, North Dakota Center for Disabilities, Minot State University, Minot, North Dakota 1992.

Modules reviewed:

- Introduction to Disabilities and Effective Instruction
- Roles and Responsibilities of Paraeducators
- Serving Students with Disabilities in Integrated Settings
- Strengthening Behaviors

Pickett, Anna Lou. A State of the Art Report on Paraeducators in Education and Related Services. The National Center for Paraprofessionals in Education and Related Services Center for Advanced Study in Education. The Graduate School and University Center City University of New York 1996.

Pickett, Anna Lou. Paraprofessionals in the Education Workforce. National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals in Education and Related Services for National Education Association, Washington, DC 1992.

Pickett, Anna Lou, and Gerlack, Kent. Supervising Paraeducators in School Settings: A Team Approach. Pro-ed, Austin, Texas 1997.

Pittaway, Jim. Keys to Maximum Paraeducator Teacher and Principal Effectiveness: Paper presented at Paraprofessional Conference. Los Angeles, California, May 1997.

Schilling, Mary. Creating Teacher/Para Partnerships. Missouri Innovations in Special Education, Vol. 25, No. 3, January 1998.

Special Education Services in Your School. Northern Plains Special Education Unit, Stanley, North Dakota 1996.

Sweezy, Kathy and Palmer, Sue. Integrating Paraeducators with the Team Planning – Directing Delegating. Paper presented at strengthening Partnerships. The 16th Annual Conference on the Training and Employment of the Paraprofessional Workforce in Education, Rehabilitation and Related Fields. Los Angeles, California 1997.

APPENDIX H

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES
(Draft)

CHAPTER 67-11-14 is created as follows:

CHAPTER 67-11-14

Paraeducator Certificate of Completion

67-11-14-01 Certificate of Completion Required
67-11-14-02 Issuing Agency
67-11-14-03 Certificate of Completion Standards
67-11-14-04 Verification Process
67-11-14-05 Effective Dates

67-11-14-01. Certificate of completion required. The paraeducator for students with disabilities must hold the North Dakota certificate of completion.

History: Effective _____
General Authority: NDCC 15-21-07, 15-41-25, 15-47-26, 15-59-05, 15-59.2-05, 28-32-02
Law Implemented: NDCC 15-59-05, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(14); U.S.C. 612(a)(15)(B)(iii)

67-11-14-02. Issuing agency. The North Dakota paraeducator certificate of completion is issued by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Public Instruction, 600 E. Boulevard Ave, Dept. 201, Bismarck, ND 58505-0440.

History: Effective _____
General Authority: NDCC 15-21-07, 15-59-05, 28-32-02, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(15)
Law Implemented: NDCC 15-59-05, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(15); U.S.C. 612(a)(15)(B)(iii)

67-11-14-03. Certificate of completion standards. Twenty hours of inservice training for the paraeducator must be conducted within one calendar year of employment in which the paraeducator assumes assigned duties. Areas of preparation include:

1. Student Support Concepts.
2. Human Growth and Development and the Impact of Disabilities.
3. Utilizing Effective Instructional Strategies To Serve Students With Disabilities In Integrated Settings.
4. Strengthening Behavior.

History: Effective _____
General Authority: NDCC 15-21-07, 15-59-05, 28-32-02, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(15)
Law Implemented: NDCC 15-59-05, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(15); U.S.C. 612(a)(15)(B)(iii)

Draft

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67-11-14-04 Verification process.

1. The local special education unit must have an approved Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Plan on file with the superintendent of public instruction detailing how requirements will be met. In order for the CSPD plan to be approved, it must include:

   (a) The nature and content of the training.
   (b) The number of contact hours.
   (c) A description of local record keeping procedures used for verification of training.

2. Indication of completion of twenty hours of training by the paraeducator must be documented by a letter of verification signed by the person providing the training. The letter of verification must be on file in the special education administrative office for monitoring purposes.

History: Effective _____
General Authority: NDCC 15-21-07, 15-59-05, 28-32-02, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(15)
Law Implemented: NDCC 15-59-05, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(15); U.S.C. 612(a)(15)(B)(iii)

67-11-14-05 Effective dates.

1. Effective on the effective date of this chapter, all certificates will be issued based on the standards and procedures provided in this chapter.

History: Effective _____
General Authority: NDCC 15-21-07, 15-59-05, 28-32-02, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(15)
Law Implemented: NDCC 15-59-05, 20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(15); U.S.C. 612(a)(15)(B)(iii)

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APPENDIX I

REQUIRED MODULES FOR PARAEDUCATION TRAINING

(To be revised and added later.)

1. ***Student Support Concepts***
2. ***Human Growth and Development and the Impact of Disabilities***
3. ***Utilizing Effective Instructional Strategies to Serve Students with Disabilities in Integrated Settings***
4. ***Strengthening Behavior***

1. *Student Support Concepts*

(To be revised and added later.)

- Applicable Laws
- Referral Process including BLST and Evaluation Processes
- Procedural Safeguards
- IEP and LRE
- Paraeducator Involvement in the IEP Process
- Service Delivery System
- Preparation checklists for Paraeducators
- Communication and interpersonal relating skills

2. *Human Growth and Development and the Impact of Disabilities*

(To be revised and added later.)

- Human Growth and Development: physical development including sensory and motor, cognitive, social and emotional, and communication and language
- Disabilities: 13 areas in IDEA, low incidence, and impacts
- Personal Care Concepts: Seizure Management, CPR, First Aid, Universal Precautions, Basics of Positioning and Transferring, Adaptive Equipment Care and Maintenance, and Toileting and Self-Care Needs

3. ***Utilizing Effective Instructional Strategies To Serve Students With Disabilities In Integrated Settings***
(To be revised and added later.)

- Adult's role
- Task analysis, discrepancy analysis
- Instructional designs and data collection
- Teaching strategies, prompting, fading,
- Providing feedback to the students on task performance
- Selective attention and motivation
- Documenting student progress through data collection and anecdotal recording

4. ***Strengthening Behavior***
(To be revised and added later.)
   - Definition
   - Causes/needs
   - Observational strategies
   - Data collection
   - Reinforcement techniques
   - Legal and ethical parameters

APPENDIX J

INFORMATION FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

INFORMATION FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

The following information is included at the request of North Dakota Vision Services – School for the Blind. Contact information:

North Dakota Vision Services – School for the Blind
500 Stanford Road
Grand Forks, ND 58203-2799
Phone: (701) 795-2708
Toll Free: 1-800-421-1181

Required Competencies:

- General working knowledge of blindness and low vision
- Knowledge of orientation and mobility (i.e., protective techniques, sighted guide, and use of the long white cane)
- Knowledge of daily living skills techniques (i.e., home/personal adaptations)
- Knowledge of new innovative adaptive technology (i.e., software, switches, synthetic speech, internet, email, refreshable Braille, electronic note takers, CCTV)
- Knowledge of prevocational, vocational, and career needs
- Knowledge of diseases and functions of the eye
- Knowledge of adaptive materials for the classroom and/or home and work environment (i.e., low vision aids, bold line paper, contrast, color)
- Knowledge of resources available and the ability to access these resources (i.e., recreation/leisure, adapted physical education)
- Knowledge of effective communication skills (i.e., Grade 1 Braille, Grade 2 Braille, computer Braille, Braille music, Nemeth Code, large-print, cassette tapes, listening skills)

Experiences/Requirements:

Listed below are methods which may be used for completion of the competencies:

- Experience with low vision simulator goggles and/or blindfold
- Work or field experience and/or a sample video tape demonstrating skills related to each competency
- Job shadowing a vision professional in any of the competency areas
- Inservice trainings offered by ND Vision Services – School for the Blind on an ongoing basis on topics related to vision
- Courses taken from a university in the area of vision may also serve as a validation
- Correspondence courses from Hadley School for the Blind, National Federation of the Blind, or National Library Services (NLS)
- A log/portfolio worksheet would be maintained by each participant in verification of the completion of the competencies
- Completion of North Dakota School for the Blind training module

Role of Vision Paraprofessionals:

Various factors influencing the specific responsibilities assigned to vision paraprofessionals could include: characteristics and personalities of teachers, vision paraprofessionals and students; interpersonal skills of both teachers and vision paraprofessionals; the experience of the vision paraprofessionals; the physical environment of the classroom; and classroom operating procedures. Individual education teachers may vary the responsibilities of the vision paraprofessional to enhance the program of instruction. The following list illustrates instructional duties which could be assigned to the vision paraprofessional in a classroom by the supervising teacher.

- Work cooperatively with a certified vision teacher
- Assist individuals in performing activities which are initiated by the teacher
- Participate as a member of the IEP team
- Assist in monitoring supplementary work and independent study
- Assist in educational demonstrations
- Reinforce learning in small groups or with individuals while the supervising teacher works with other students
- Provide assistance with individualized programmed materials (i.e., tactual map, large print worksheets, notes from blackboard or overhead)
- Assist in preparation/production of instructional materials (i.e., enlarge, Braille)
- Carry out instructional programs designed by the classroom teacher
- Work with classroom teacher to develop classroom adaptations
- Carry out tutoring activities designed by the supervising teacher
- Read aloud or listen to students read (Braille or large print)
- Read or adapt tests and worksheets
- Verbally describe events on field trips, videos, etc.

Duties the Vision Paraprofessional Should Not Perform:

- Should not assume full responsibility for supervising and planning activities
- Should not program and prescribe educational activities and materials
- Should not grade subjective or essay tests
- Should not be responsible for medical needs of students
- Should not contact parents without knowledge of supervising teacher
- Should not be responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating original content instruction
- Should not be used as a substitute for licensed teachers unless he/she possesses the appropriate substitute teacher's license and is employed as a teacher on a temporary basis, and paid accordingly
- Should not be assigned full responsibility for supervising the classroom field trips, etc.